Straight Talk on the Fall Ballot Props

california JOURNAL

September 2000
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Inside:
Updating Sharon Davis

The Web & politics:

How the Internet is changing the dynamic between campaigns, candidates and voters.

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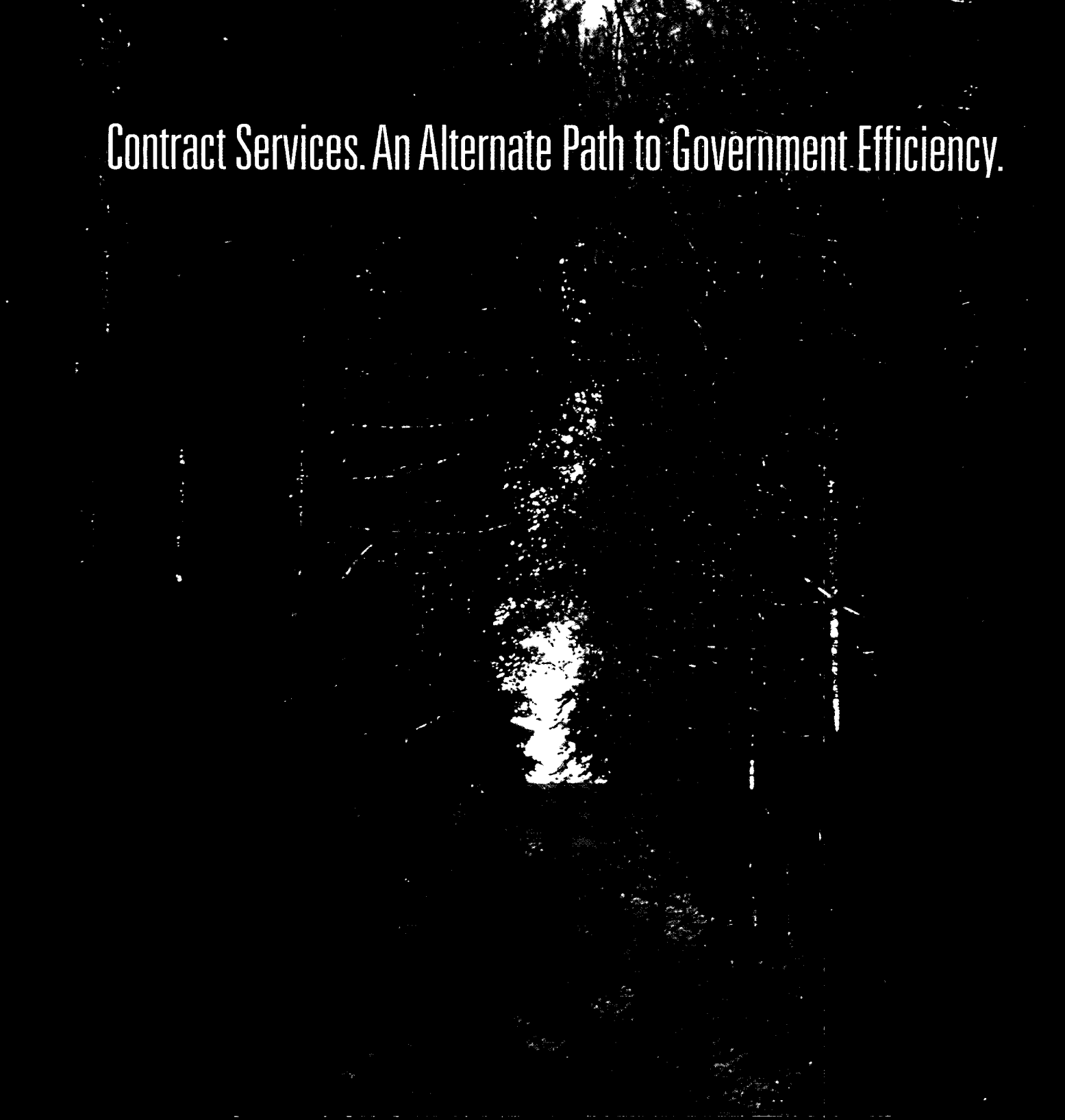

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california JOURNAL

September 2000
Volume XXXI, Number 9

Where the Candidates Stand

Now that the convention hype is fading away, it's time to get down to the serious business of sorting out where the candidates stand. This is our mission as we prepare next month's *California Journal*, our trademark October election preview containing exclusive, district-by-district coverage of congressional, statewide and legislative races. For 30 years, we've considered it our honor to perform the public service of illuminating California's vast political landscape.

Cynthia H. Craft

This year, we also are highlighting a partnership — with KVIE's "California Capitol Week," the California Healthcare Foundation, *The Sacramento Bee* and the PBS Democracy Project — to underscore the importance of health care as an election issue. What are the candidates' positions? How do voters weigh in? What reforms are most urgently needed?

Each of the media partners will break off a chunk to explore during October, with the aim of focusing on the substance, rather than the style, of the November 2000 election. "California Capitol Week" will produce two programs, one on senior services, another on care for the working poor; the HealthCare Foundation plans to release results of a broad survey in a special insert in the *California Journal*; *The Bee* is devoting a Sunday Forum section to health care. We hope the collaboration bears fruit for voters at the polls.

Cover by Dagmar Thompson

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For voters as well as candidates, the Internet is changing how politics is played.
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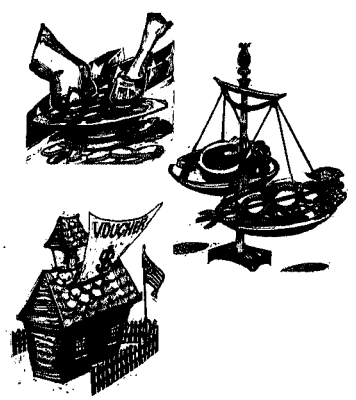

Upfront
Separated at birth

Talking Points
Political bread crumbs

Soap Box
"Good Ol' Boy" Party?
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Two Cents
No miracles in school test scores
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D.C. Perspective
The U.S. Senate sisterhood
By Marc Sandalow

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umbrage

Thanks, Pop! You can build a better mousetrap in the world of campaign finance reform, but there will always be a smarter mouse somewhere. Witness the latest "mouse trap" offered up to kill the use of big money in campaigns — Proposition 34 — and one Lou Papan, Democratic assemblyman from Millbrae. One of the things Proposition 34 does is restrict large transfers of money from one candidate to another by capping transfers at the same level as individual campaign contributions ($3,000 for legislative races, $5,000 for statewide races). Now consider Papan, who has one more election this November before term limits usher him from the Assembly in 2002. By then, Papan's daughter, Gina Papan, will be running for dear old Dad's Assembly seat. In fact, she's already got the fund-raising jump on her Democratic competition. A campaign report filed with the Secretary of State's Office shows the younger Papan sitting on $184,471. Impressive? Not so fast. Virtually all of Gina's money — $183,871 to be exact — came from her father's campaign account. That kind of six-figure transfer, of course, will be illegal following this election if Proposition 34 becomes law. Gina must be proud to have a father who plans ahead.

Flunking awareness. Want to find out where your state Assembly, Senate or congressional representative stands on important issues, such as education, gun control and abortion? Then check out the results of Project Vote Smart's 2000 National Political Awareness Test (www.votesmart.org) — that is, as long as your representative was one of the few who bothered to participate in the NPAT. Of California's 131 legislative and congressional incumbents running this November, only 41 provided answers to Project Vote Smart's questionnaire. That's a participation rate of only 31 percent. But, hey, at least this isn't Texas, where the participation rate for incumbents nose-dived to 18 percent. Project Vote Smart has been conducting its NPAT for the past eight years to help voters all across the country become more informed about candidates. But, as the results indicate, that's difficult to do when the folks holding office can't even fill out a lousy form and send it back in.

"There is no direct relationship between the quality of an educational program and its cost."
— Terman's Law

Separated at birth?

He grew up attending exclusive private schools before earning a law degree from a cushy university. He spent years toiling on behalf of his own political party before being elected to head one of the world's largest economies. His ride to higher office came by repositioning his party to the center after years of voter rejection for being too liberal. Now in higher office, he's regarded as a control freak, his policies seem more poll-driven than from the heart, and he has angered members of his own party by plucking ideas from the opposition to broaden his base of support. You can read all about him in the July issue of Vanity Fair magazine. No, it isn't Governor Gray Davis, but British Prime Minister Tony Blair. The similarities between California's top gun and Britain's highest-ranking politician, however, go beyond the obvious stiff and stodgy exteriors. Turns out Blair also wakes up every morning worrying about how he might lose the next election.

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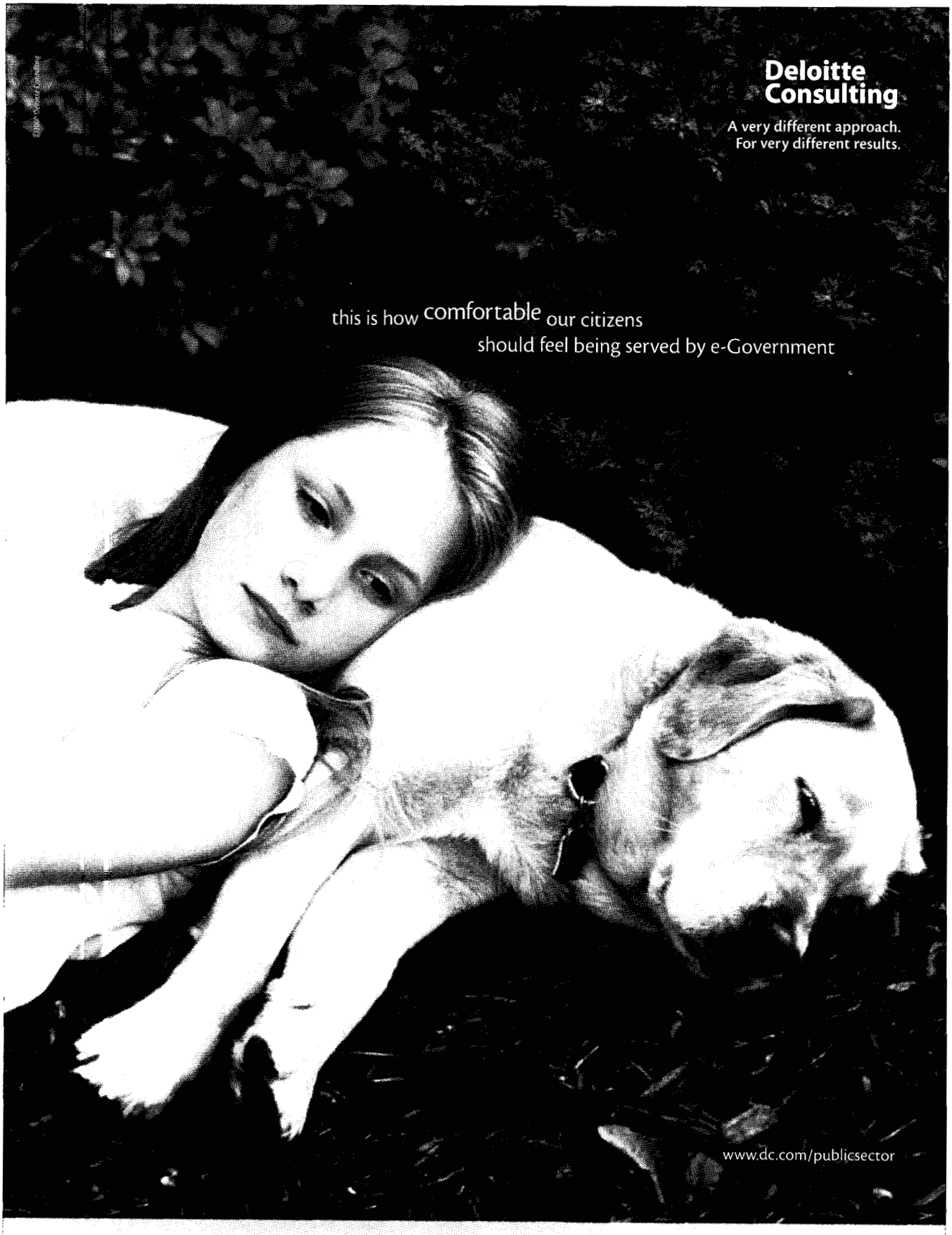

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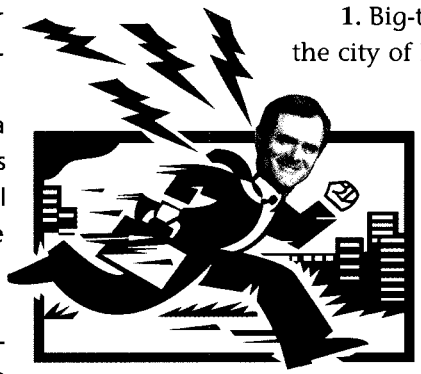
Flashback:

Attack of the killer electric bills

When last we met state Senator Steve Peace in the pages of this magazine, he was a proud recipient of *California Journal's* Legislator of the Year Award in our June "Minnies" issue.



Now, just a couple of months later, Peace (D-El Cajon) is on the hot seat as the Legislature's architect of electricity deregulation in California. The veteran lawmaker lauded by *CJ* for never shrinking away from complex issues now finds himself suffering unforeseen consequences. He is the target of growing public wrath over rising electric bills.

Peace is in the eye of a tempest, trying to ride out a policy-maker's version of "A Perfect Storm." Blame-gamers say Peace made his berth and now must lie in it.

Indeed, the veteran pol is now reportedly working frantically around the clock in search of a way to outsmart run-amok deregulation. Colleagues and friends are rooting him on; some, as the *Wall Street Journal* reports, also expressing concern that the quick-witted, high-wattage Peace "not swing wildly out of control in the process" of tackling this mess.

"Has 'The Fixer' finally met his match?" the *WSJ* asks.

Stay tuned.

Follow the Money:

Stuffing the "donut hole" with bread crumbs

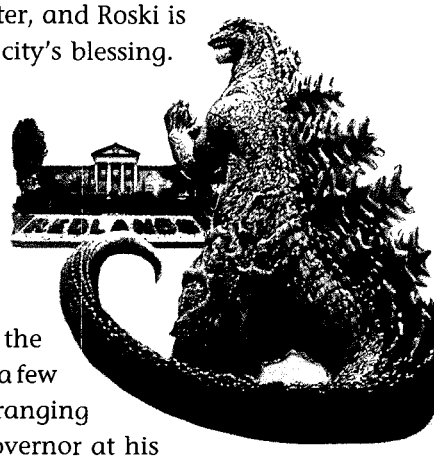
In a never-ending quest to fill his campaign war chest, Governor Gray Davis sometimes leaves behind traces of a narrative, like little bread crumbs telling the story of his fund-raising strategies. A case in point:

1. Big-time LA developer Ed Roski is turned down by the city of Redlands in a bid to build a fancy, high-end shopping mall. So he goes over the city's head, *waaaay* over, to the state Legislature in Sacramento.

2. Legislators pass a bill for Roski, giving the go-ahead to a project that local officials haven't OK'd. The case attracts attention because it's a throwback to the days when developers threaded deals through Sacramento – and because it involves 1,000 acres of old orange groves, a "donut hole" of unincorporated open space surrounded by the city of Redlands.

3. Governor Gray Davis vetoes the bill, but leaves the door open a crack for Roski by saying he may reconsider if city and builder can't agree.

4. It's 2000, a year later, and Roski is no closer to winning the city's blessing. He returns to the Legislature, which resurrects a bill and passes it. It allows the county to provide water and sewer to the "donut hole," cutting the city out of the deal.



5. Roski does Davis the favor of bringing together a few prospective donors and arranging a meet-'n-greet for the governor at his request. Roski hosts the soiree at his Staples Center luxury box on the night the Grammy Awards are held below. Cost? It's a $20,747 non-monetary contribution to the governor. Meanwhile, his firm, Majestic Realty, separately gives Davis a total of $80,000 in cash.

6. Davis signs the bill in July.

Quotables.....

"I didn't at first have the courage to do it, but they promised they wouldn't abandon me."

— GOP congressional candidate Rich Rodriguez of Fresno, speaking of Republican Party recruiters who flew him to Washington, sent him to candidate school, paid for a poll and imported a staff.

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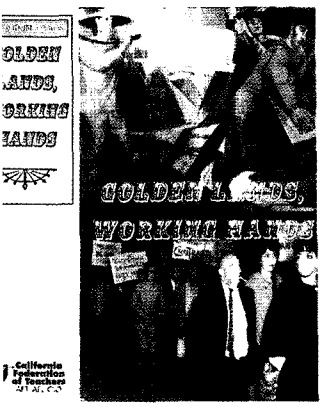
Excerpts: From the Video Shelf

"Golden Lands, Working Hands"
Written and directed by Fred Glass
Produced by California Federation of Teachers

There may be no better way to spend Labor Day than watching a 10-part documentary on the history of the California labor movement, refreshing one's knowledge of the roots of unionism in the Golden State.



"Golden Lands, Working Hands" provides a panoramic view of the breadth of the union's development in California, and in the process also gives a general review of our state's history. Reaching as far back as the days of the Spanish missions, it illustrates how immigration into California set the stage for today's ethnically diverse workplace, with all of its tensions and inequities. We see the life-threatening treatment of Chinese laborers by railroad barons, but we also see how Mexican and Japanese agricultural workers fought together in the early 1900s for inclusion in the same union.

In that, they failed. The year was 1903, and the Japanese Mexican Labor Alliance, the first farmworkers' union in California, had petitioned the American Federation of Labor for membership. The federation's reply? "It is understood that in issuing this charter to your union we will under no circumstance accept membership of any Chinese or Japanese." J.M. Lizarras, secretary of the California alliance, rejected the racist condition, taking a principled stand that ended up thwarting his chapter's hopes for growth. By letter he replied, "In the past, we have counseled, fought and lived on very short rations with our Japanese brothers, and toiled with them in the fields, and they have been uniformly kind and considerate. We would be false to them and to ourselves and to the cause of unionism if we now accepted privileges for ourselves which are not accorded to them."

This is but one of many enlightening anecdotes in this lengthy, but quick-paced, educational documentary, written and directed by Fred Glass, of the California Federation of Teachers (www.cft.org.) Although Glass intended it for use as a teaching aid for high school students, it has enough depth to appeal to lifelong learners of all ages.

Compiled by California Journal Editors

By the numbers

Cashing in, tuning out

5: Number of minutes on-air that TV stations are urged to give to candidates each evening as a "public interest standard."

40: Average number of seconds on air that U.S. TV stations devoted to candidates for the 2000 primary.

$9.26 million: Political ad sales for Los Angeles' KABC from January 2000 to April 2000.

35: Average number of seconds on air that LA's KABC devoted each evening to candidates in the month before the 2000 primary.

$49.1 million: Political ad sales revenue that California TV stations took in from January 1 to April 1, 2000.

0.5: Percentage of total news time that the state's top five media markets devoted, on average, to the California governor's race in the three months prior to the November 1998 election.

$100 million: Amount governor's race candidates spent on TV ads in that period.

Source: Alliance for Better Campaigns, www.bettercampaigns.org.

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Is the GOP the 'Good Old Boy' party?

by Kate Karpilow

It has been a decade of decline for elected women in California's Grand Old Party. Republican women now hold fewer seats in California's Legislature than they did 10 years ago, while the number of Democratic women has more than doubled.

Those are startling statistics, but the picture is even more lopsided at the federal level. In 1990, two women, both Democrats, held seats in California's 45-member House delegation. Today, 13 women – 12 Democrats and one Republican – serve among the state's 52 congressional representatives. And both of California's U.S. senators are Democrats – and women.

The November 2000 elections won't right the imbalance. No new Republican women are expected to gain election to Congress from California. In the Assembly, most strategists expect at best an overall increase of two, possibly three, Republican women.

And predictions for Republican women in the state Senate? Zero. Zip. Nada. Veteran Republican Senator Cathie Wright of Simi Valley is termed out, and no new GOP women are expected to win their races. Not since 1984 has the Senate been without a Republican woman.

Women in the California Legislature

	Assembly		Senate	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Democrats	7	15	3	10
Republicans	7	4	2	1
Independents		1		

Source: Center for American Women & Politics, Rutgers University

Most of the Legislature's elected Republican women cite traditionalism as one reason for their low numbers. They say Republican women are more likely to stay at home, raise kids and only then pursue political ambitions. The cumulative impact of these life choices is a smaller pool of women GOP candidates.

Other GOP insiders point to other implications of such traditionalism — that Republican women too often choose supportive roles and work behind the scenes. Rather than push their way into political office, they serve as helpmates in groups like the California Federation of Republican Women, a GOP volunteer operation.

According to Republican political consultant Kevin Spillane, "Republican women aren't beating at the door and saying, 'Let me in!' – and until they do, their numbers won't increase."

Several Republicans note that Democratic women were more likely to have roots in the social movements of the 1960s and '70s. The civil rights, environmental, farm worker, feminist and gay movements all served as training grounds for moderate and progressive Democratic women. Not so for many Republican women.

Carol Mayer-Marshall, a California leader in Women in the Senate and the House (WISH), a national pro-choice Republican political action committee, suggests that some women candidates are casualties of the party's civil wars on abortion policy. "Many of the Republican women who might run are pro-choice," she said. "But they are made to feel uncomfortable and don't run – or they run and get knocked out in the primary."

At the congressional level, GOP women also may suffer from a lack of deep pockets. According to consultant Spillane, "Republican women don't donate like Democratic women." While Democratic women benefit mightily from the financial and other support resources of EMILY's LIST, which gave $7.5 million nationally in the 1997-98 election cycle, Republican women's PACs have not yet matured to offer comparable support.

Though many Republican leaders proclaim that their party is a "big tent" open to members of all stripes, Republican consultant Eileen Padberg says the GOP remains "a Good Old Boy Party."

Indeed, all of the Republican women interviewed, either politely or more heatedly pointed to the traditional views held by some Republican men as one reason that women are not actively recruited or supported in the party. A high-level, male GOP staffer went even further, acknowledging a "more patriarchal culture" in the GOP.

Scott Baugh, the Assembly's Republican leader, concedes that "the Republican Party in the past has not done a good job in promoting women." But Baugh said the GOP increased its outreach to women this election year, interviewing and recruiting women candidates, even making endorsements across lines in the party's abortion battles.

Nevertheless, Republican Assemblywoman Charlene Zettel of Poway warns: "If Republicans don't conduct more outreach to women as voters and candidates, we are endangered as a party."

With term limits turning out incumbents, there's considerable opportunity for Republican women to secure a larger share of legislative seats. But to do so, Republican women must step forward and take charge. "Democratic women took power for themselves," said Spillane, "and that's what needs to happen in the Republican Party."

Kate Karpilow is executive director of the Institute for Research on Women and Families. Comments may be sent to **edit@statenet.com.**

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"I think it's taken awhile for doctors and their patients to warm up to managed care because it's change, and change is always frightening.

"However, I strongly believe managed care offers excellent benefits for both providers and patients. Managed care has clearly put more emphasis on preventive care. Mammograms, pap smears, colon screenings, both pediatric and adult immunizations–all of these are emphasized by managed care. And there's no question they are saving lives.

"Likewise, emphasis on evidence-based medicine, from which practice guidelines are based, is helping us better understand the disease management of many chronic illnesses.

"The unfortunate cases of care being withheld, in my experience, seem to be the exceptions to the rule. I think those exceptions happened under the old system, too.
It seems that the countless positive outcomes, where managed care companies have really gone to bat for their members, aren't considered news.

"Yes, managed care is change. But we shouldn't fear it. In fact, I believe it has the potential to help provide access for many more people and at the standardized levels of care that are necessary."

"The message I'd like to get across is that managed care can work."

Dr. Jill Broffman
Internist
Los Angeles, California

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Coming of age

When U.S. Senator John McCain's fledgling presidential campaign arrived in California shortly before the March 2000 primary, there was no time to lose. With only one tiny office in San Diego and no field operation up and running, McCain's young staff was scrambling to get its candidate's message out statewide. Cut off from the GOP's extensive volunteer network, McCain was largely on his own.

Enter the Internet.

Armed with an e-mail Rolodex eventually stuffed with the names of some 25,000 volunteers statewide, the McCain troops hit their keyboards, sending out e-mails to whip up crowds for rallies, register volunteers, assign precinct walkers and conduct staff briefings.

Every candidate – from school board to president of the United States – needs a spot in cyberspace, making the Internet an essential campaign tool. The 'Net is changing the way the political universe thinks about campaigning.

By Claudia Buck

"All of our grass-roots organization was done electronically ... with half the time and half the preparation that campaigns normally use," said Alfie Charles, who served as McCain's California press secretary.

Rather than rely on rooms of phone-bank volunteers, McCain's California cadre simply pressed the "send" button. "We'd get information up [on e-mail] and forward it to supporters," said Charles, "and the snowball effect was enormous. It brought a lot of new blood into the campaign."

Although it didn't vault him into higher office, McCain's style of electronic campaigning is being repeated by others and is no longer unique. Every politician, it seems, is rocketing into cyberspace. And voters, hungry for political information that isn't broken into sound bites or packaged by consultants, are racing to meet them there. In ways large and small, the Internet is changing the way that campaigns are waged and how voters connect with political candidates, causes and issues.

According to a recent national poll, a majority of American adults consider the Internet an important source of election information. Based on interviews conducted in March by the

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on the Web

Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies at American University, some 29 percent of those interviewed — a percentage roughly equal to 30 million adults — say they use the Internet to access information about politics, candidates or campaigns.

In California, some 1.5 million adults are expected to seek out political information on the Web prior to this November's election, according to Kim Alexander, president of the California Voter Foundation.

"The problem with modern democracy is that everyone is too busy and politics is too complicated," said Alexander, whose nonprofit foundation was a cyber-pioneer six years ago in catapulting campaign contributions and ballot information onto the Web. "We need to make it more convenient for people to get the information they need to make informed choices before they vote. That's where the Internet comes in."

The new town hall

From the convenience of their computer screens, the politically curious can register to vote, sign a petition, organize a protest, engage in political debate. "Internet technology is giving us a chance to go back to the town hall, back to a very participatory type of democracy," said California Secretary of State Bill Jones.

The signs of that cyber-connection are everywhere:

- In California, candidate Web sites are proliferating like summer wildfires across the political landscape, from only two statewide by candidates in 1994, to some 300 for this November's election.
- Webcasters, a new breed of political reporter, broke new ground in online coverage of this summer's national political conventions, as Republicans and Democrats hosted the most wired conventions in political history.
- Of the 61 percent of Californians who go online weekly, 15 percent do so to seek out political news and information, according to a Field Poll conducted in February – the first time that pollsters asked about political Internet usage.
- From Intel to the city of Oakland, some 325,000 employees got on-the-job e-mails urging them to vote in the March primary. That effort, launched by the California Secretary of State's Office, is expected to double that number prior to November's election.

Some say this dizzying pace of political interface is the next new thing, the magnet that will attract a younger, more Net-savvy crowd to politics. Particularly among 18-to-24-year-olds — those most likely to use the Internet but the least likely to vote — the Internet may be their only source of political knowledge.

"They aren't watching TV news, they aren't reading newspapers. Those mediums don't cry out to them," said Alexander, whose foundation is issuing its seventh on-line voter guide in November 2000. "They expect to find what they want on the Internet and our role is to make that information available."

Is it overrated?

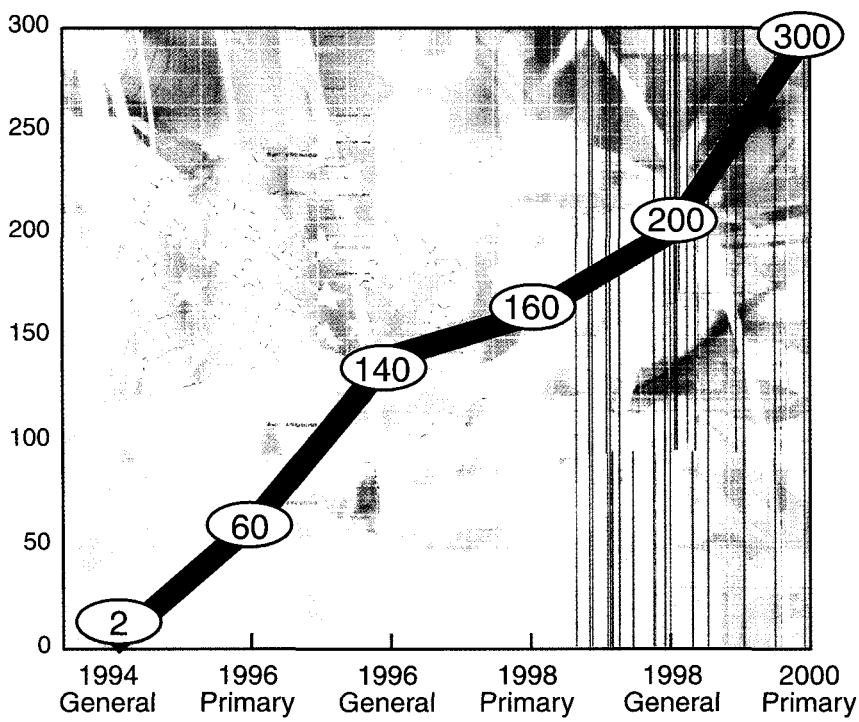
But others say the Internet's vaunted ability to attract the politically bored is way overblown. "It's really serving the political junkie very well," said Barbara O'Connor, professor of communications studies at California State University, Sacramento. "But younger people are not out surfing the Net looking for politics. These are the people who say, in poll after poll, that politicians are worthless. To assume that [the Internet is drawing them into politics] is naive."

In general, O'Connor says, the Internet is "a healthy thing" because, unlike other communications media, it dishes up the whole story. "You can log onto the Internet and pull up John McCain's speech at the Republican convention, and you'll get the whole text, not just some broadcast sound bites," O'Connor noted.

In California, the heartland of

Candidates increase their Web visibility

California campaign Web sites have exploded from two to 300 over the last six elections.



Source: California Voter Foundation. The figures include proposition campaigns and statewide, legislative, congressional and presidential candidates on the California ballot.

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high-tech, many politicians believe a Web presence is what voters expect. San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown, whose re-election campaign against Supervisor Tom Ammiano last year engaged in cyber-battles via dueling Web sites, said, "San Francisco's a high-tech community, so you have to use it. It's absolutely necessary as a way of communicating with voters."

But it's not just political pros who are venturing onto the Net. In the 17th Assembly District, political neophyte Tom Montes became possibly the first legislative candidate to greet voters with an interactive Web site that was geographically targeted to voters in his district. With a colorful banner ad running in 20 zip codes in his Stockton-area Assembly district, folks logging onto major Web browsers, such as America Online, could instantly link to his Web site, www.electmontes.com. Beside the usual menu of political biography, endorsement lists, issue statements and family photos, visitors could check an online box to answer: "Would you like to volunteer? Would you like to make a contribution? Would you like a lawn sign?" And, of course, the ultimate question: "Do you plan on voting for Tom Montes?", with the "yes" circle conveniently blackened in.

Although he didn't win, Democrat Montes finished third among eight candidates in the blanket primary, despite being outspent. Montes believes the Internet allowed him to connect with voters "in a more personal and a more high-tech manner" than he ever could have afforded with TV, radio or print. "It's no substitute for personal contact," said the San Joaquin County deputy district attorney, "but it's the next best thing to being on the phone or face-to-face with the voter."

Fast and cheap

Not every politician, however, believes a Web face is useful or essential. Assemblyman Rod Pacheco (R-Riverside), former GOP minority leader, says he has no Web page because "I'm somewhat cautious, and because of that caution, I don't want to get out there with something that doesn't work."

When voters can hit the delete button on a campaign e-mail just as fast as they can toss a campaign brochure in the trash can, what's the appeal of the Internet?

The answer is two words: fast and cheap. For Senate Republican Leader Jim Brulte (R-Rancho Cucamonga), the Internet is "a direct mail vehicle" with the ability to steer a truckload of information to a captive audience, quickly and effortlessly. "I have the Third House [lobbyists] on e-mail, and if I want to push information to those 1,300 lobbyists, I can do it," said Brulte. "Same thing with the Capitol press corps."

Through its Victory 2000 Web site, Brulte said the California Republican Party sends out 400-500 e-mails a week to volunteers and party faithful but, even so, he acknowledged that, as a political tool, "it's one we've underutilized."

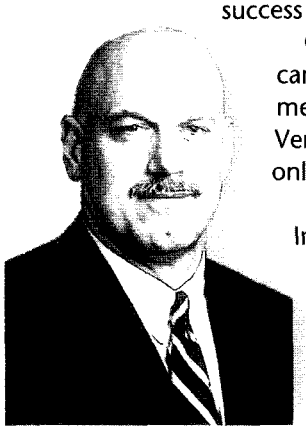
Bob Mulholland, a California

JesseNet: Nobody does it better

Looking back, it's an eye-opener to recollect that the nation's top political seers were so "unplugged" into the power of the Web that, just two years ago, none bet correctly on the outcome of the Minnesota governor's race.

Minnesota
Strategic Directions of the Ventura Administration

Perhaps as unsettling is the realization that, in the election cycle since, no one has been able — despite trying mightily — to duplicate Jesse Ventura's stunning success in using the Web to win office.



One thing is clear: All the money in the world can't buy the kind of fortuitous timing, alignment of luck and cyber-savvy that allowed Ventura to click so well with his constituents online.

His campaign was the pioneer in using the Internet as a behind-the-scenes coordinating tool, with Ventura and his handlers seeing the Web's potential as a tailor-made tool for low-budget, third-party, alternative campaigns.

Through "JesseNet," Ventura not only reached new blocs of supporters, it mobilized them, thanks to an e-mail list connecting 3,000 backers. With Election Day looming, the campaign's big closing event, a 72-hour tour of the state, was organized and coordinated entirely through the Web. A single e-mailed plea inviting volunteers to help out prompted 250 activists to step forward.

Phil Madsen, director of Ventura's Web site, was quoted in *Campaigns & Elections* magazine observing that the "Internet for us served as the nervous system of the campaign."

JesseNet lives on today. Its bulked-up membership of 7,000 still gets mobilized from time to time, such as when Governor Ventura wants to persuade the Legislature to follow his agenda. He simply presses "send" on an e-mail titled, "Let's Kick Some Legislative Butt!" And sure enough, JesseNet responds.

– CJ Staff

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Democratic Party operative, recently attended a London gathering of left-leaning political parties from around the world where technology issues were discussed. He discovered that in some ways, California is behind the rest of the world in how it connects with voters. "We've been walking door-to-door for decades," said Mulholland, "but the Internet is giving us a new approach." For the coming election, rather than relying on phone-bank volunteers to repeatedly call Democratic voters, reminding them to vote, Mulholland said the Democratic Party is collecting e-mail addresses so that voters can promptly respond after they've gone to the polls or mailed in their absentee ballot. "If they send us an e-mail, saying they've voted, we'll take their word for it and not bother them by phone," said Mulholland. "Ten years from now, if we're standing on the corner leafletting, we'll be out of it."

Get Net

Political consultants also have embraced the Internet, albeit with some reservations. Many say that a campaign without a Web site raises suspicions among voters that the candidate either isn't "with it" or doesn't have enough bucks to ride the Web.

"We're telling our clients they have to be on the Internet," said Ray McNally, a longtime GOP campaign consultant. "If you don't have a Web site, it makes you look like a dinosaur."

But consultants are far from abandoning TV, radio and billboards, the more passive mediums that catch voters unawares while driving in their cars or loafing on the couch. By requiring a voter to log on and actively seek a candidate online, the Internet means, "You have to break a sweat," said McNally. "If you're told someone has a Web site, you have to actually log on and seek that out. Most people aren't going to do that."

As a fund-raising tool, the Internet has become a potent ally for some candidates. When McCain, struggling along at 2 percent in the polls, put up a Web site in this year's March primary, adding a fund-raising link was almost an afterthought. Within 48 hours of winning the New Hampshire primary, that afterthought had netted $1 million. Of the four major party nominees, McCain led the pack in on-line fund raising.

But some well-heeled candidates, those with deeply entrenched sources of campaign cash, don't even bother with on-line asking. In San Francisco, Brown said he didn't solicit "one nickel" on line in his mayoral race last year because "it's just not effective." Gray Davis, whose fund-raising prowess easily rivals that of Brown, did ask for on-line contributions in his 1998 race.

With so much political information ricocheting through Web-land, it's no surprise that nagging concerns have arisen over such issues as privacy and on-line security, which have hampered efforts to offer on-line voting in California and other states. Another concern is policing a medium that's so new it's not even mentioned in most campaign election laws. Federal elec-

Political Empowerment

The list of political Web sites stretches as long as campaign promises, but offers far more substance. Among the thousands of election-related sites sprouting in cyberspace, here are some of our favorites:

www.calvoter.org: The pioneer of political Web sites, this on-line home of the nonpartisan California Voter Foundation debuted California's first "on-line voter guide" in 1994, containing straightforward info on ballot propositions and statewide candidates. In 1996, it pioneered on-line campaign finance disclosure, which has since become state law and available on the secretary of state's Web page. Billing itself as a "one-stop shop" for Internet election information, Calvoter's page is loaded with links to political parties, county election offices, statewide officers and legislators, special interest groups, media and even maps of California's political districts. For political neophytes, it offers how-to guides on registering to vote, sending letters to editor, qualifying a ballot initiative and running for office.

www.opensecrets.org: Pick your state, enter your ZIP code and you're on your way to finding who contributed to whom in your neighborhood. Funded by foundation grants and individual donations, this site belongs to the Center for Responsible Politics, a

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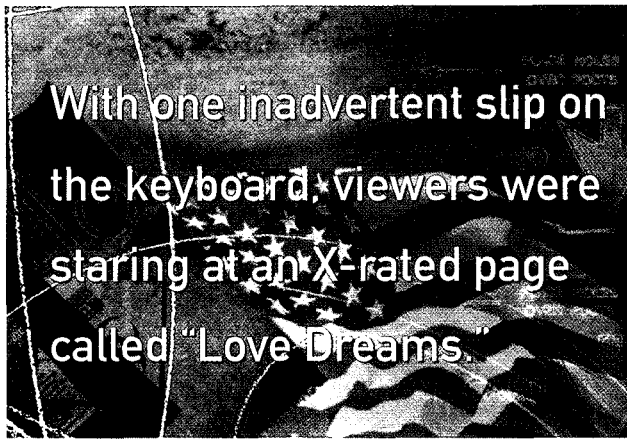
tion officials have been attempting to sort out the tangled net of what is legally allowable on the Web as candidates increasingly engage in on-line fund raising, debating and campaigning. During hearings earlier this year, the Federal Elections Commission treaded into this uncharted territory, seeking comments on how to regulate a medium as free-wheeling and intangible as cyberspace.

On the cusp

"The Internet has thrown an utterly unanticipated means of political communication before everyone," said Laurence C. Gold, associate general counsel for the AFL-CIO, in a *New York Times* report.

"We're on the cusp," said Benjamin L. Ginsberg, an attorney for Republic presidential nominee George W. Bush, "just as we were in 1952, and TV had just taken over as something different."

Something different is exactly what many Net-izens encounter in the brave new world of on-line politics. During this year's presidential primary, some voters got an eyeful when they typed in "McCain2000.com", looking for the Republican contender. Instead of McCain's smiling mug, however, up popped a raunchy sex site. With one inadvertent slip on the keyboard, viewers were staring at an X-rated page called "Love Dreams" that was registered to a California company.



A case of on-line dirty tricks? Or shrewd marketing by an entrepreneur counting on Web browsers with clumsy typing skills? It's unclear but cyber-squatting — where political domain names are bought up by those hoping to make some trouble for a particular candidate or make some bucks for themselves — is not uncommon.

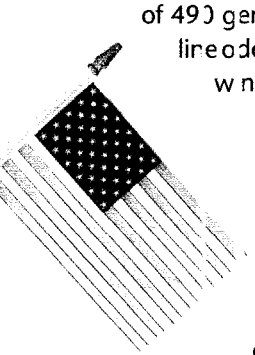
Tony Fazio, president of Winning Directions Inc., a national Democratic direct mail company based in San Francisco, recalls his firm contemplated opening an on-line store offering political goods and services. When the partners tried to register a Web site as "campaignstore.com," they found the name was already taken — by a dentist in Philadelphia. "He told us we could have the name — for $150,000. We told him 'No way.'"

That's the same reaction McNally has had in similar situations: "You just have to get creative and come up with a different [Web] name. No way am I going to pay some little pirate for what's basically air."

---

nonpartisan research group that tracks campaign donations in every congressional race in the country. It lists campaign donations by geographic region, by industry and by political party.

www.campaignline.com: As the Web face of "Campaigns and Elections Magazine" in Washington, D.C., this site dishes up political commentary, book reviews, campaign reporting and even trivia quizzes on a variety of election issues. A special feature is "The Political Oddsmaker," an online look at which candidates are the best bet. Out of 490 general elections nationwide in 1998, the on-line oddsmaker boasted a 98 percent rate of picking winners.



www.vote-smart.org: With a host of political luminaries including former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford among its founding board members, this national database sponsored by the nonprofit Project Vote Smart covers 13,000 candidates for public office nationwide, from president to statehouse legislators. It researches their backgrounds, issue positions, voting records, campaign finances and performance evaluations done by 100 special interest groups. It also offers a free "Yellow Pages" of on-line political Web sites, organized to help Net-izens navigate the political landscape efficiently.

www.ss.ca.gov: The California secretary of state's home page hosts CAL-ACCESS, the state's on-line disclosure of campaign contributions for all statewide, congressional and legislative candidates and ballot measures. It also lists lobbyists and their campaign donations, provides election calendars and voting information and chronicles the state's Internet Voting Task Force findings. On Election Night, the site carries complete election results, updated every five minutes after the polls close.

www.grassroots.com: Launched last September, grassroots.com calls itself an online community for political activists. Pick a topic from A (Abortion) to Y (Youth and Family), and you'll find where to join a march, write a letter, read a position paper. It invites viewers to join its "feisty but civilized" chat rooms on political issues and was one of several on-line Web-casters covering the national political conventions this summer.

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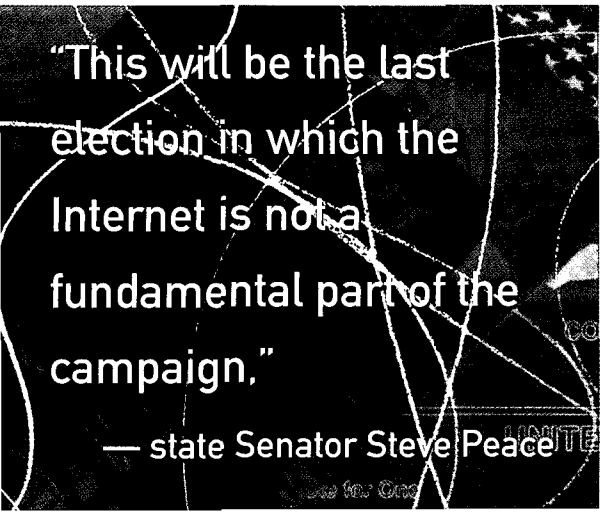

Negative sites

Candidates can find it hard to squash all the negative hits that pop up against their candidacies on the Web. For instance, there are dozens of Hillary Clinton-named sites that bash the First Lady. The George W. Bush presidential campaign reportedly bought up a bunch of potentially embarrassing Web names, such as "www.bushsucks.com." But the Bush folk likely didn't anticipate the one unveiled by the Democratic National Committee during the opening day of the GOP's Philadelphia convention: "www.iknowwhatyoudidintexas.com". One of 19 Web sites run by the Democratic National Committee, it carries biting commentary of the governor's record in Texas, according to Mulholland.

As in most things high-tech, California has been a cyber-pioneer: the first to allow online voter registration, first to publish ballot pamphlets on the Web, first to offer live, Internet election results, and the first to study the possibility of voting via the Internet, according to the Secretary of State's Office.

That's a long way from 1994 when the Web was wobbling along in its infancy and just two candidates had Web sites: state Superintendant of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin and gubernatorial candidate Kathleeen Brown, whose site was reportedly designed by her son.

As the Internet's political potential matures, the next breakthrough in cyber-campaigning likely will come from somewhere completely unexpected, according to longtime GOP political player Dan Schnur, who was Governor Pete Wilson's press secretary and served as national press secretary to the McCain campaign.

"It's going to come from school board, from city council, from a legislative district candidate ... someone we've never heard of. And I guarantee it's going to come from somebody who's behind in their race because campaigns, with rare exceptions, have too much at stake to be experimental."

In the meantime, this election may well be a watershed.

"This will be the last election in which the Internet is not a fundamental part of the campaign," predicts state Senator Steve Peace (D-El Cajon). "Starting in 2002, the prime engagement will be the Internet. Everything else will be a sideshow."

Claudia Buck is managing editor of California Journal. *Comments may be sent to* **edit@statenet.com.**

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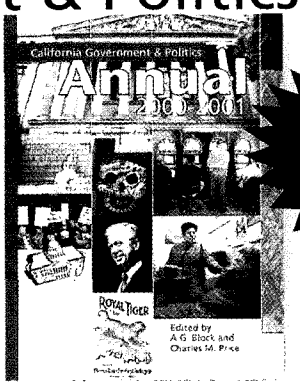

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Testing's predictable ups and downs

by Emelyn Rodriguez

The latest STAR test results showing a second year of escalating scores for California public school students have generated luminous reviews and grabbed headlines across the state. Higher scores are described by news editors as a victory, "a sign that the Golden State's public schools may slowly be on the mend." They are touted as the result of recent reforms, proof positive of "genuine improvement in our schools."

"Our reforms are working," Governor Gray Davis proclaimed. "Scores are going up, but that's only because — for the first time — we are holding schools accountable for their scores."

These gains, while heartening, are less than miraculous. They are modest and tenuous. They may not have anything to do with what is taught in California classrooms or with recent efforts of lawmakers and the governor. They may also be short-lived.

These gains, while heartening, are less than miraculous.

The reviews and stories could have been written in advance by testing experts who long ago found that test scores follow a predictable pattern: Typically, they start low, increase quickly for a few years, then gradually level off or even decline over time.

"It's somewhat like a sawtooth pattern," said Loretta Shepard, a K-12 testing expert and professor of education at the University of Colorado at Boulder. "It is fairly typical to have steady rises once a test is introduced."

In other states —such as Virginia, Texas, and Washington — where standardized tests are used, scores also rose rapidly for several years. However, increases eventually decline or stop altogether, as was the case in Maryland, which recently experienced a dip in scores for the first time in the state's seven-year testing program.

Generous early gains occur as students and teachers grow familiar with the exams. Results level off as the initial boost from test preparation fades, experts say. In the early years of a test students generally post better scores because they've "learned shortcuts, tricks," said Shepard. "They're learning how to do well without learning the real concepts."

Even with the notable gains in California, most students merely achieved the national average in math and language skills — two areas where they posted the greatest improvement. Reading scores also improved but stayed below the national average at most grade levels, despite intensive teaching efforts in recent years.

It is not known whether any of the most recent reforms — such as the intensive reading programs or the school-ranking system passed last year during a special session of the Legislature — contributed to higher test scores. If anything, improvements probably stemmed from initiatives already in place for several years, like class-size reduction, the longer school year and the establishment of statewide curriculum standards — measures initiated under the administration of former Governor Pete Wilson.

"If Gray Davis had done nothing, test scores would have improved," said Senate Republican minority leader Jim Brulte, (R-Rancho Cucamonga), who gives the governor high marks for political acuity. "That's because of reforms enacted before his governorship. I have to give him political points for taking credit for something he didn't have much to do with. ...But he also deserves credit for the measures he has put in place, and it doesn't diminish what he's trying to do."

Still, the education establishment and state officials contend that the STAR test scores for 4.3 million California students in grades 2 through 11 reflect real progress. "The new scores show that public school teachers and students are not only accountable for their work, but their hard work is paying off," said Wayne Johnson, president of the 300,000-member California Teachers Association.

This year, Davis introduced further reforms he described as "the largest and most aggressive package of teacher incentives ever offered by any state in America." The measures include personal income tax credits for teachers who have taught for at least four years, beginning-teacher salary hikes from $32,000 to $34,000 and billions of dollars in block grants to districts for local priorities such as raising teacher pay or fixing facilities.

However the practical effects of the Davis reforms won't be felt for years to come, perhaps only after his re-election bid in 2002.

Viewed from that perspective, even Davis' seemingly bold vow — not to seek another term if test scores don't improve — appears a pretty safe, if not a characteristically cautious, bet.

Emelyn Rodriguez is senior editor of the California Journal. *Comments may be sent to* **edit@statenet.com.**

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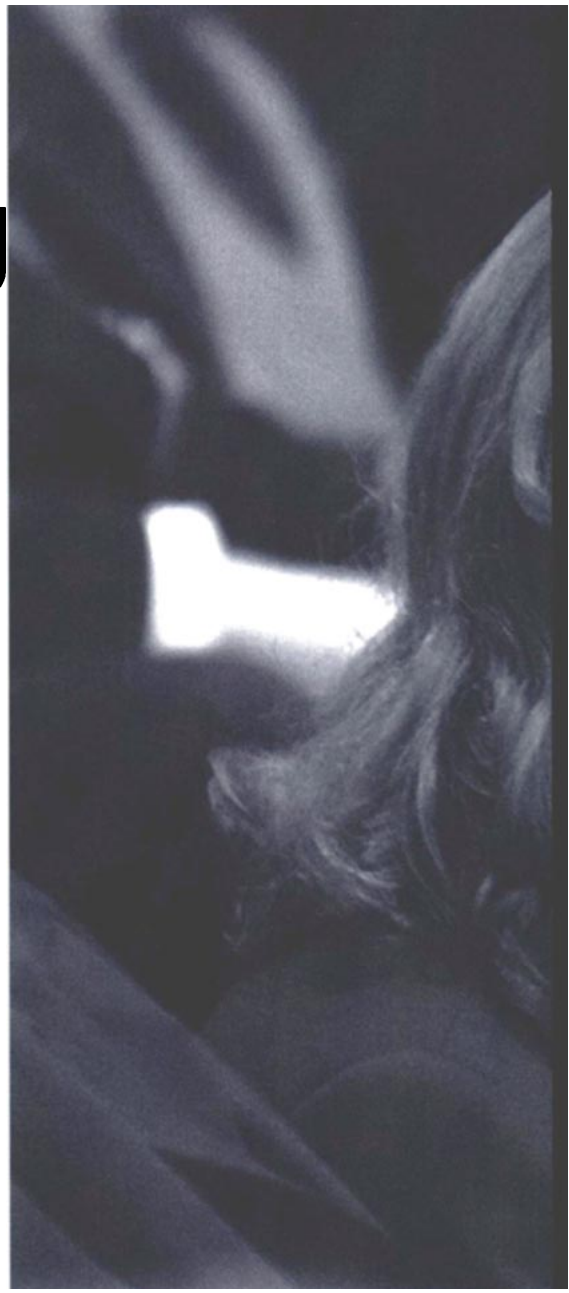
Redefining Sharon Davis



Sharon Davis with an Elk Grove pre-schooler at Gray Davis' State of the State speech.

For the first time since 1966, California Democrats have a first lady to help sell their agenda. So far, Sharon Davis is proving not only a strong political draw for the party, but she is emerging as an adept adjunct to the governor's office as well.

By Kathleen Les

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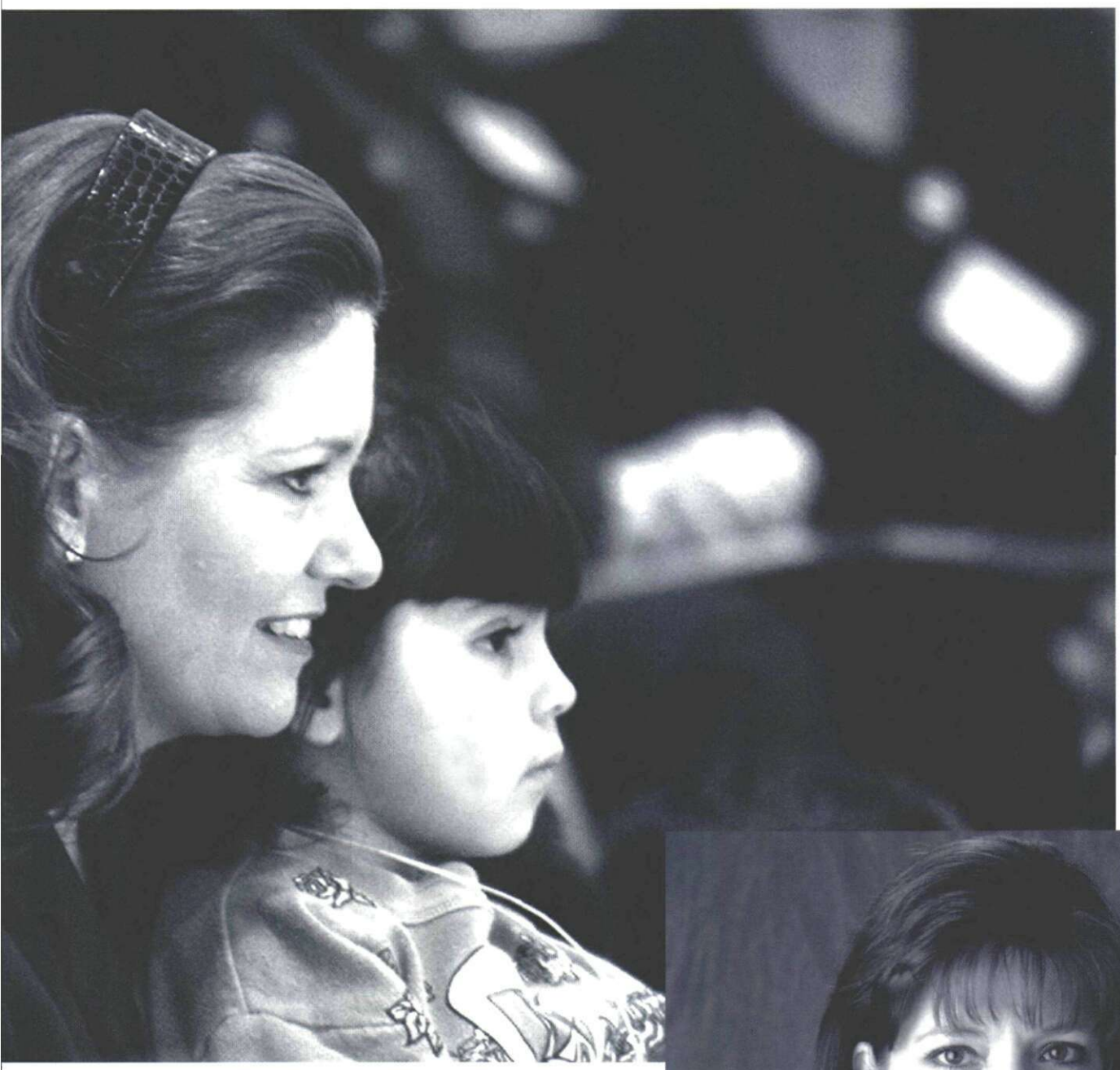

It was a chance stop into her husband's office at the end of a long day that led to First Lady Sharon Davis' proudest first-year accomplishment as California's head spouse. Chatting with the governor as she popped in to hurry him home was state Senate President pro Tempore John Burton, making a pitch for a bill to help the homeless.

Off-handedly, the governor suggested the first lady might be interested in the $10 million pilot project Burton was pushing to direct the chronically homeless

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into mental-health counseling and placement services. The comment was designed to appease Burton (D-San Francisco), but was tempting enough on the face of it to prompt Sharon Davis to hone in on the proposal with trademark zest.

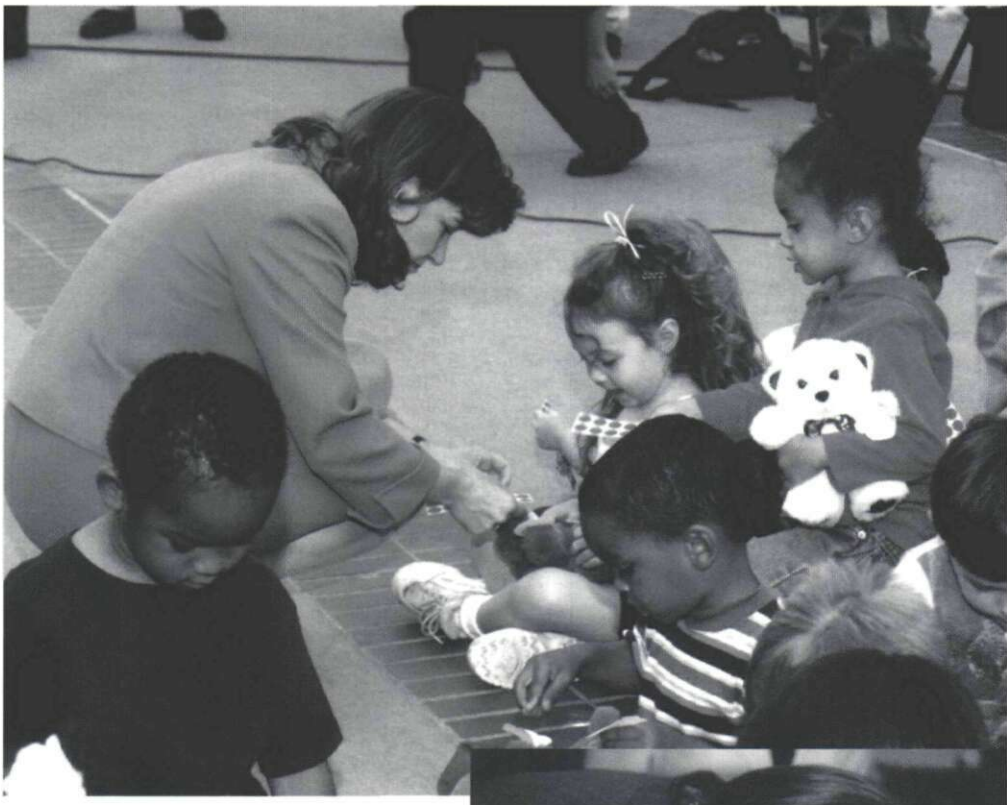
Having previously served on a nonprofit board that helped the homeless in Los Angeles, she immersed herself in the proposed legislation, calling upon top experts in the field for advice. She also drew on her own sad recollections of a younger brother, homeless and estranged from her family for three years. Then, with the bill's author, Assemblyman Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento), in tow, she visited the Los Angeles County jail, where many homeless, often suffering from mental illness, end up for a night or two before landing back on the streets. With TV cameramen filming footage of the first lady and Steinberg during the tour, the pair spoke with inmates and wardens alike.

Ultimately, Sharon Davis took the rookie assemblyman aside and suggested he add a provision to the bill to measure its success. "If you really want the governor to get behind this," she told Steinberg, "you have to add some accountability measures."

Sharon Davis will tell you that hers is just "one voice" when it comes to influencing her husband. But her innate ability to warm up a room and connect one-to-one with all manner of people — ranging from dignitaries to the downtrodden — makes her effective in many a venue. That, coupled with her quickness at picking up issues, particularly social issues she identifies as priorities, prompts one old friend to call her the governor's "best weapon."

Davis follows two well-regarded first ladies — Gloria Deukmejian and Gayle Wilson — but really has little to no script to go on. It is not simply that their political parties differ. It is also that the role of first lady is still evolving beyond a job description that for so many years was limited to party hostess and figurehead.

But Sharon Davis wants to make it perfectly clear that while she is helping carry out her husband's agenda, she has no interest in becoming his second-in-command.



Sharon Davis helping to organize the children at a "Stop the Pox" vaccination promotion in Sacramento.

A career of her own

Being first lady is a big enough job for someone who never imagined much more than life as a homemaker while growing up in the small San Diego suburb of Santee, the daughter of a Navy father and a mother who tended to seven children. At the age of 21, Davis took to the air as a flight attendant with California-based PSA. Three years later she had the fateful encounter with the man who would become her husband and, later, governor of California. Clad in the airline's hallmark purple hot pants and go-go boots, she seemed an improbable match for the ultra-serious and then-shaggy-haired Gray Davis, who at the time was chief of staff to Governor Jerry Brown.

Though she now credits her 19 years as a flight attendant for making her comfortable with all types of people and "learning to smile even when your feet hurt," she wasn't always politically adroit. Her Republican parents instilled in her the importance of voting, but she paid scant attention to the raging issues of the day. In 1978, the year she met Gray Davis, he inquired about her opinion on the hotly debated Equal Rights Amendment. She drew a blank.

One of many school visits.

"I didn't have a clue what he was talking about. Being a flight attendant you weren't really worried about

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Sharon Davis speaking at the California Governor's Conference for Women, Long

breaking through the glass ceiling," she said.

Nor did Sharon Davis, now 46, really spend much time as a political wife during the first 16 years of marriage to Gray Davis, as he was rising up the ranks from assemblyman to controller to lieutenant governor. Instead, she continued her airline career while studying journalism at California State University, Sacramento. She aspired to become a political reporter, but soon realized being married to a man in politics made it difficult, if not inappropriate, to cover the field. Instead, she used her writing skills to pound out press releases and perform public relations work promoting business clients at trade shows. Her experience as a paid professional working outside the home, she believes, is what differentiates her from California's previous first ladies. (Nancy Reagan, however, did work as an actress.)

Office space

Similar to Gayle Wilson before her, Davis has turned the role of first lady into a full-time endeavor. It was Wilson who established the Office of Special Projects as an adjunct to the governor's operation, ensuring, for the first time, that California's first lady had working space inside the Capitol. From that small office, Wilson got involved in the development of a number of education and children's health programs — chief among them an insurance program for impoverished children. She also played an active, behind-the-scenes role in the development of science and math education standards.

When it became her turn, Sharon Davis defined the role as she saw fit. The governor, first and foremost, asked that she be "his ears and eyes on education." To that end, she has traveled up and down the state over the last 18 months listening as teachers, students, principals and parents in more than 50 schools shared their thoughts on the governor's fixes for education.

"People talk to me differently than they would to Gray," says Davis.

It doesn't hurt that she is a natural on the stump, with a perennially warm smile and a gentle touch for young and old alike. Noted one longtime associate, she comes across "like the best friend you never had." She's approachable in a way that Gray Davis isn't, partly because of the security bubble that necessarily surrounds the governor and partly because of his stiffer public persona.

A trusted adviser

It is as a bridge between the governed and the governor that Sharon Davis finds herself most useful. And because she is the one person for whom Gray Davis always has a smile, she is, in many respects, his most trusted adviser.

After she mentioned to the governor, for example, the praise she heard from teachers in his new reading academies, the program's budget ballooned. Whereas last year, 6,000 teachers underwent the retraining, next year 70,000 teachers will receive coaching in an expanded program of brush-up courses on algebra, social studies and science. When the first lady recalled her experience working in schools in Southern California's poor neighborhoods and what a difference a good principal always seemed to make, the governor called upon the University of California to sharpen the administrative skills of school principals with a new training academy. And after talking with judges about the lengthy delays in placing foster children in permanent homes, Sharon Davis worked through Rita Saenz, the director of the state Department of Social Services, to successfully recommend hiring extra personnel to erase the backlog of paperwork that prolongs the finalizing of adoptions.

Davis never attributes these successes to herself alone. "It's exciting when I see that the things I mention to the governor get him talking to others to see if he finds a consensus," she says.

Davis counts Hillary Rodham Clinton, whom she describes as a friend, among her role models. While she recognizes that Clinton got caught in a politically hazardous quagmire

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over her involvement with HMO reform, Davis believes Clinton has shown how a first lady can be a credible partner in a governing relationship. "I don't think anybody expects you're going to be forming policy, but I don't think they mind if you advocate on issues where you have some interest and background," said Davis.

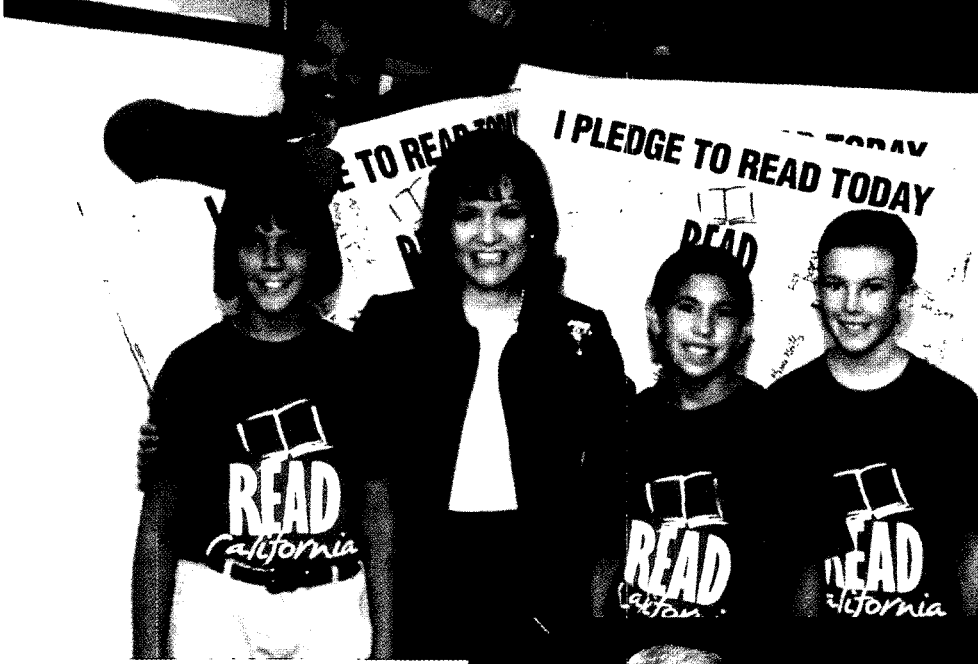
She is not Hillary

Assembly Majority Leader Kevin Shelley, a San Francisco Democrat who shared the stage with Sharon Davis in July at the Ortega branch of the San Francisco Library, draws a sharp distinction between the presidential first lady and the one in California. "Unlike Hillary Clinton, who seems to be a lightning rod, Sharon, for whatever reason, hasn't offended anybody," he said. Davis' pleasant personality and the notice she commands as first lady has legislators like Shelley willing and eager to make joint appearances with her. Often Davis shares billing with Democratic legislators and attracts the kind of media coverage that politicians lie awake at night praying for.

"When she champions issues, that brings a great deal of the state apparatus into play," conceded Shelley. "But the fact that she knows the issues well, coupled with her innate charm and passion, make her very formidable. She's not playing the role of somebody acting out a script," said Shelley. Davis brings to her job a resume of previous experience working with children's issues, Shelley noted. "Her role as first lady is just a higher-profile extension of what she did before," he said.

Until she resigned in 1998 to join her husband on the campaign trail, Davis worked nearly four years heading up the Ralphs/Food for Less Foundation. She directed some $3 million a year to more than 400 youth and social service groups in the mostly poor enclaves of Los Angeles. There she was able to marry her love of children with her innate political skills.

As foundation director, she developed a program to collect coins from customers at Ralphs grocery stores, a public relations coup that pulled in $400,000 the first year alone for Little League, after-school and day-care programs for underprivileged youth. She orchestrated radio spots, designed advertising, coached store employees and served as spokesperson for the program. "She was the best asset the foundation had," said Darius Anderson, a board member at the time who went on to become Gray Davis' chief fund raiser and is now a Capitol lobbyist.



Sharon Davis with contestants at "Page Flippers," a contest to get kids to read, June 2000.

The Burkle connection

From her experience with the Ralphs foundation, Davis also acquired a valuable political ally for her husband. Ron Burkle, the billionaire owner of the Ralphs grocery store chain dropped $300,000 into the governor's campaign coffers in 1998 alone. Today, Sharon Davis maintains her financial link with Burkle. Last year she earned $35,000 attending quarterly board meetings to help scope out new business opportunities for Goldenstate Foods, the primary food distributor for McDonald's restaurants and another of Burkle's enterprises. Anderson discounts the likelihood that the governor's wife might use the connection to act as political go-between for her husband and the food chain magnate. "Burkle has direct access to whomever he wants already," said Anderson, adding that Burkle had an equally close relationship with former Republican Governor Pete Wilson.

Anderson suggests the first lady's best use is as an aide to her husband, not as some kind of stealth political operative. An impressive speaker on the campaign trail, she was always the next-best choice to stand in for Gray Davis, and that's still true today. Constituent groups are "starved for a Democratic presence at their events," says Anderson, which is why the governor relies on his wife to visit schools, make appearances with Democratic legislators and take up issues he himself lacks time for. "The first lady has reinvigorated the Democratic base — women's groups and other constitu-

Dancing at the Governor's Inaugural Ball

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With Gray Davis at his swearing in as lieutenant governor in 1995.

encies left to languish without a Democratic governor and first lady," Anderson said.

The first Democratic first lady in more than three decades also has shown she's not about to let partisanship dictate her course. When Gayle Wilson met with Davis briefly prior to taking office, she suggested the incoming first lady chart her own course. She did, however, urge Davis to keep the flame going for one Wilson effort —a mentoring program pairing adults with at-risk children needing more guidance to deter them from gangs and drugs.

A seamless transition

Davis has already begun touring the state heralding a call for 1 million mentors, four times the number the Wilsons set out to recruit. Already the governor has more than doubled the budget to $20 million for the California Mentoring Initiative. "The beauty is how seamless the transition has been," said Andy Mecca, head of the California Mentoring Foundation. The Wilsons got the program off the ground, but Sharon Davis is even more "laser focused" than her predecessor on energizing the call for mentors, he says.

Steinberg, whose pilot program for the homeless has grown six-fold to $63 million under Gray Davis, credits the first lady with focusing the public and the governor on the homeless predicament. "There's no question her involvement really helped push the issue [in public] and gave it the spotlight it needed," said Steinberg. But while the first lady championed the homeless program and likely had a conversation or two with the governor about the subject, she's kept an arm's length between herself and the Legislature. "She never made promises" about the governor's intentions, he said.

So far, Sharon Davis has walked a skillful line between staying close to issues of importance to her without falling into the role of an inside player. Unlike in the Wilson administration, when the GOP governor relied on a much wider ring of advisers, Gray Davis hasn't shown much of an inclination to share power or open up to others. That means the first lady, for whom he clearly displays affection and respect, carries all the more clout with him.

"Gray knows he can trust Sharon," said longtime friend and associate Bobbi Metzger. "So she gives him one more avenue to reach out to the people of California." But, says the former public relations firm owner, the first lady made a conscious decision after the election to not become a conduit to the governor. "People who try it know it doesn't work," Metzger said.

In her own way, Sharon Davis intends to keep a high profile on her priority issues—children's health and education. And as long as opportunities arise, such as on the day she happened onto John Burton in her husband's office and landed an assignment to look over a homeless assistance bill, she'll be ready to immerse herself, ever mindful not to appear as a power behind the throne.

Kathleen Les is an associate editor of California Journal. *Comments may be sent to* **edit@statenet.com.**

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Sequoias vs. the political buzz saw

President Clinton's declaration of a new Giant Sequoia National Monument in the popular Sierra Nevada will save 328,000 acres of beloved "Big Trees," some as old as 3,000 years and taller than the Statue of Liberty. So why is everyone so unhappy?

By Michael Doyle

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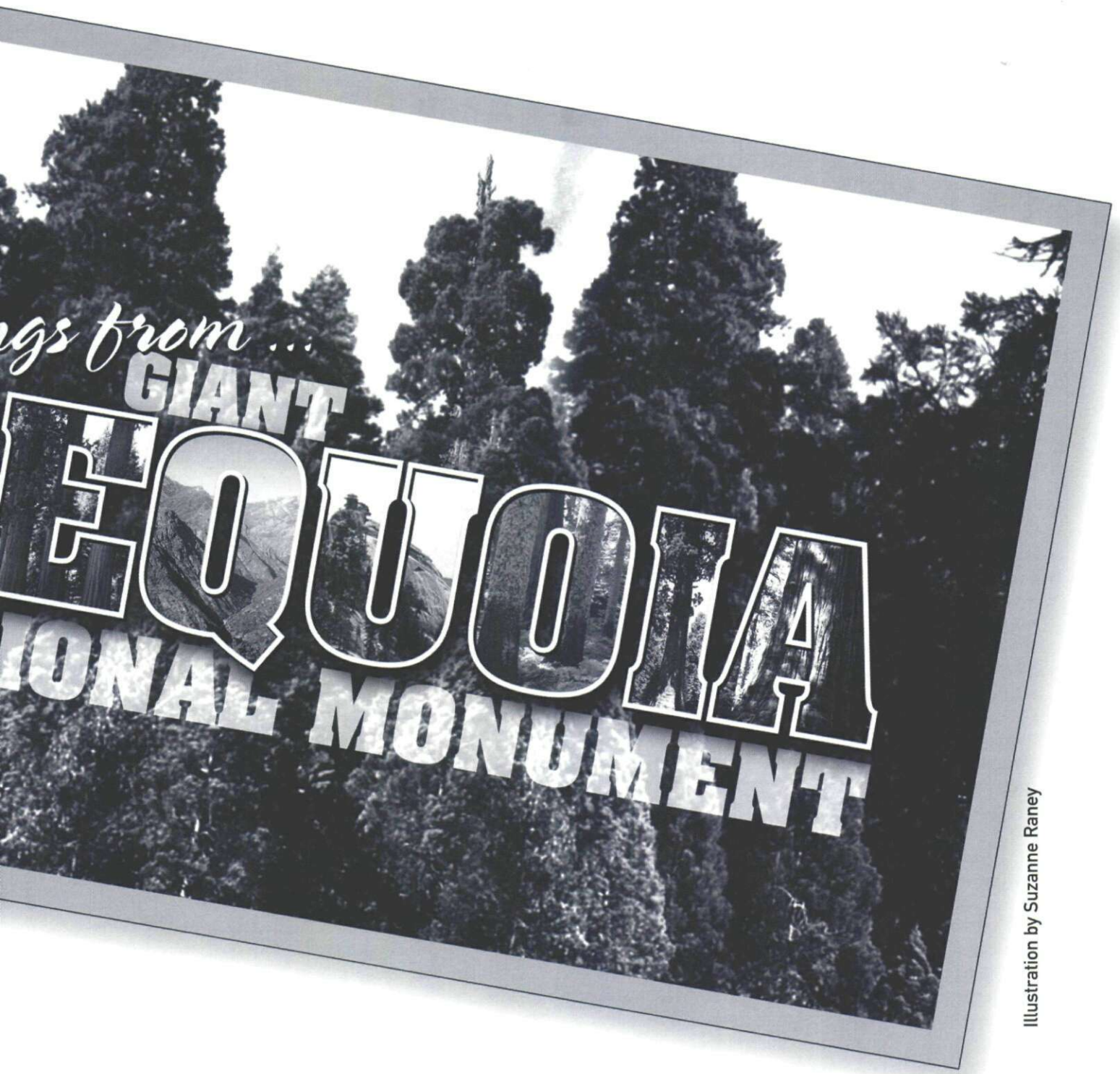

Illustration by Suzanne Raney

Bakersfield science teacher Joe Fontaine vividly remembers the sprouting of his sequoia activism nearly four decades ago. It was the early 1960s, and he was a Boy Scout leader ushering lads home from a hike through the Sequoia National Forest in the southern Sierra Nevada. The hike thrilled and inspired the boys — at least until Fontaine's troop stumbled upon a shocking sight: the scarred evidence of logging gone wild.

"[We] came across this clear-cut," Fontaine recalled, "and it looked like a war zone." The sight spurred Fontaine into action. He became an early proponent of preserving the giant sequoia trees, joined the Sierra Club and eventually climbed the organization's branches to become the Sierra Club's national president. This year, following many twists and turns, Fontaine and his allies finally achieved a long-sought summit when President Bill Clinton established a new 328,000-acre Giant Sequoia National Monu-

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ment. Fontaine called the new monument "the biggest step forward in protecting the sequoias in the 40 years that I've been working [toward] it." At the same time, on a brisk mid-April morning, Clinton sunnily declared the monument "is not about locking lands up, it is about freeing them up for all Americans for all time."

But the new sequoia monument is more than a simple triumph for persistent environmentalists and a legacy-seeking president. It also presents a case study offering multiple lessons: in what a politically dangerous friend Clinton can be for Western Democrats; in how a simply worded, nearly century-old law can be expanded into complex new uses; and in how rancorous environmental policy-making has become.

It also breathes life into a new political verb, enunciated by an unhappy U.S. Representative Cal Dooley, a Hanford Democrat who resisted the rapid creation of the new monument because of worries over timber job losses. "I've been Ortonized," Dooley said.

That's as in Bill Orton, a one-time Democratic member of Congress from Utah who lost his seat in 1996 following Clinton's snap creation of the 1.7-million acre Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in Orton's home state. Dooley says he is confident he won't lose his own seat to Republican challenger Rich Rodriguez this fall but he can certainly feel his former colleague's pain. Like Orton, Dooley represents a district where Democratic registration co-exists with moderate-to-conservative views and considerable Clinton skepticism. Like Orton, Dooley was essentially ambushed by a new presidential monument proposal; and, like Orton, Dooley was confronting an environmental decision whose appeal seemed greatest in distant urban areas far from the wilderness winning protection. "This might be very politically popular in San Francisco or Los Angeles, but they're totally oblivious to the needs of the Central Valley," Dooley said.

Bi-partisan opposition

The San Joaquin Valley's congressional Republicans, U.S. Representatives George Radanovich of Mariposa and Bill Thomas of Bakersfield, likewise opposed Clinton's actions with the doom-tolling inevitability of a High Sierra thunderstorm. Dooley, though, had voted with Clinton 72 percent of the time last year. Even as Clinton was designating the controversial new monument, Dooley was one of the president's chief House allies in rounding up votes for a China trade deal. None of the congressmen, needless to say, was anywhere near the mountains when Clinton flew in by helicopter April 15 for the formal announcement. Clinton himself did not linger around the sequoia groves very long. He quickly decamped for two Southern California fund-raising events, leaving behind him all the grunt work of establishing what is now one of the largest national monuments in the Lower 48.

"There are," Sequoia National Forest Supervisor Art Gaffrey said, "a lot of very challenging planning activities ahead of us." These challenges include creating a scientific advisory board, drafting a sweeping environmental management plan to cover an area roughly the size of Marin County, and coping with the economic and political fallout. Even before Clinton's formal announcement, the San Joaquin Valley lawmakers tried pushing long-shot legislation that would have postponed creation of the Giant Sequoia National Monument until at least next year. Within a month of Clinton's declaration, the Dinuba-based Sierra Forest Products announced it was shutting its sawmill doors. The House Appropriations Committee, responding to congressional Republican leaders, inserted into a fiscal 2001 Interior Department funding bill a prohibition on spending any money to plan new monuments including the Giant Sequoia. Republicans knew the prohibition would not survive the resulting presidential veto threat — the House later dropped it — but they wanted to nail home their point.

President Clinton helicopters in to sign into creation the Giant Sequoia National Monument.

Seeking a political balance

"You have to make the fight every way you can," Radanovich said. Fight being the operative word. It's what people have long done over management of the Sierra Nevada mountains — not just the Sequoia National Forest itself, but the entire range that includes 11 national forests, three national parks and more than 11 million acres of federal land. A politically sustainable balance between logging and environmental protection has been incredibly hard to find, even as Forest Service timber sales in California fell from 1.9 billion board feet 1988, to 784 million board feet in 1992, to 384 million board feet in 1999. On the Sequoia National Forest alone, logging fell from 85 million board feet in 1991 to under 7 million board feet in 1999.

The endless disputes are summed up by the Forest Service's frustrating search for permanent new management rules. Try to follow the bouncing chain saw: The agency issued "temporary" logging rules for the Sierra in 1993. They were supposed to last two years, protecting habitat of the California spotted owl. A draft environmen-

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Peyrone area of the Sequoias. Note size of a person next to the big trees.

tal impact statement, including proposed permanent rules, came out in February 1995, but loggers didn't like it. One year and 4,000 comments later, the agency prepared to release a revised EIS. But this time, *environmentalists* didn't like it, and so in an unusual and controversial pre-election move, the Forest Service in 1996 withdrew the new study. The new, new Sierra plan was then supposed to be finished in July 1999. It wasn't. Finally, in May, the latest draft version hit the streets. It'll be final this fall — maybe.

In this combative environment, the sequoia groves might at first blush seem to be a little bit of Switzerland — a neutral and beautiful haven on which everyone could find common ground. After all, the tallest of the trees reach higher than the Statue of Liberty, while the oldest has lived more than 3,000 years. They command respect from anyone with a soul, and have long been accorded special protection. As early as 1874, the California Legislature made it illegal to damage Big Trees over 16 feet in diameter. The Sequoia National Park was established in 1890, and in 1908 President Theodore Roosevelt carved a new Sequoia National Forest out of the larger Sierra National Forest. In the 1980s, an environmentalist challenge led to the 1990 Mediated Settlement Agreement that required mapping and the creation of new protective buffers totaling about 8,000 acres around the groves.

Defining a "buffer"

Nor was Clinton the first election-year president to discover the photogenic sequoias. In 1992, then-President George Bush had issued an executive order mandating that some 38 groves on the 1.2 million acre Sequoia National Forest "not be managed for timber production" because the groves are "legacies that deserve special attention and protection for future generations."

"It's not as if the issue came out of the blue," former Sierra Club President Michael McCloskey said. "This area has had lots of study."

But the consensus over protecting individual sequoia trees comes crashing quickly down once the question broadens into what the groves themselves need to survive. How big a buffer zone should be established around the 19,345 acres that comprise the groves; how much watershed do the groves require; what kind of forest thinning is permitted to reduce the risk of fire? Moreover, even when agreements are reached, administrative orders or legal settlements can sometimes blow down in strong political winds. McCloskey, for one, recalled hearing Forest Service assurances about sequoia protection back in the 1960s, only to see the Reagan-era Forest Service fall short.

By the early 1990s, environmentalists had turned to the late U.S. Representative George Brown, the liberal Democrat from Riverside who had long been an ally. Brown introduced legislation to create a 440,000-acre sequoia preserve. Even when the Democrats controlled Congress, Brown's legislation withered on the vine. The Clinton administration itself opposed the bill, with then-Forest Service Chief Jack Ward Thomas testifying in 1994 that a sequoia preserve was unwise because "flexibility to choose [management] methods where they are appropriate is essential to retaining sequoia groves over time." From 59 co-sponsors in 1993, the measure attracted only 27 co-sponsors in 1997 and 11 in 1999, when Brown was struggling with his ultimately fatal illness.

Enter Edgar Wayburn, one of the grand old men of the American environmental movement. The San Francisco

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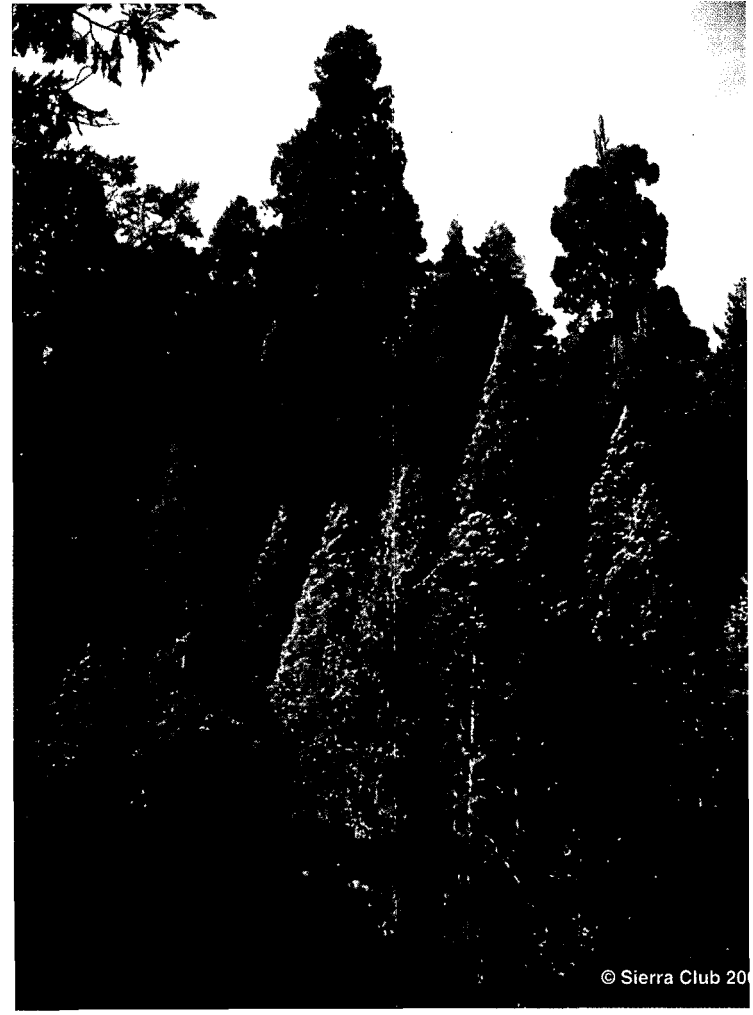
physician and longtime Sierra Club leader had earlier played key roles in promoting the Redwood National Park and setting aside of millions of acres of Alaska land. In the summer of 1999, still an erect and vivid presence at the age of 93, Wayburn was at the White House to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Wayburn took the opportunity to advise a receptive Clinton that establishing a sequoia monument would be a winning idea. In one swoop, it would bypass the Republican-controlled Congress, protect the groves and commemorate the late George Brown. Wayburn's seed fell into well-prepared soil, for Clinton had already come to appreciate the monument-creating powers granted him under the 1906 Antiquities Act. "It's one of the few occasions in which a president can use his own discretion to do something tangible that leaves a legacy," McCloskey said.

An act in need

The Antiquities Act was the law Clinton had earlier used to establish Utah's Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. The law effectively enables the chief executive to cut through regional political tangles; Utah politicians had wrangled for years over public lands before Clinton stepped in. Wrangling, of course, is also the way disputing parties negotiate differences and reach a settlement everyone is invested in. Clinton's imposed action, by contrast, had alienated nearly the entire Utah political establishment. Utah Governor Michael Leavitt testified that he first heard about the proposed monument by reading of it in the newspaper. Nine days later, he was called at 1:58 a.m. by Clinton, but he still didn't know fully what was afoot until 12 hours later when the president summoned television crews for the announcement on the lip of the Grand Canyon. The Grand Canyon had little to do with Grand Staircase-Escalante, except it offered better visuals and it was outside the borders of unfriendly Utah. But as Kathleen McGinty, then-chair of Clinton's Council on Environmental Quality, wrote in e-mails subsequently obtained by a House committee, "designation of the new monument would create a compelling reason for persons who are now disaffected to come around and enthusiastically support the administration" while those opposing the Utah monument "in candor, are unlikely to support the administration under any circumstances."

Arguably, such vast monuments are well beyond what the authors of the 1906 Antiquities Act ever envisioned. The briefly worded law permits a president, "in his discretion" to declare national monuments covering "historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures and other objects of historic or scientific interest." Iowa Republican John Lacey explained in 1906 that the measure, prompted by a desire to preserve prehistoric Indian ruins, "will merely make small reservations, where the objects are of sufficient interest to preserve them." Asked by one anxious Texan how much Western land the legislation might lock up, Lacey replied, "not much." This soothing language, however, has scarcely restrained the 17 presidents who have



Silver Creek area

since put more than 70 million acres nationwide into national monument status. Presidents tired of being frustrated by Congress can appreciate the unilateral authority granted by the law: There's no requirement for congressional approval, public hearings, prior study or local consultation.

All of which not only goes behind the back of Congress, it tends to irritate it. When President Franklin Delano Roosevelt created the 221,610-acre Jackson Hole National Monument in 1943, angry Western lawmakers blocked spending on the new monument for seven years. In time, the Jackson Hole monument was embedded into the Grand Teton National Park, but lawmakers also wrote a guarantee that only Congress could expand or create new monuments in Wyoming. Legal challenges, however, have failed to dislodge new monuments. And though the House in 1997 passed a bill requiring eventual congressional approval of any monument larger than 50,000 acres the Senate never acted.

"The Antiquities Act, in our estimation, is one of the most successful environmental laws in American history," Interior Department Solicitor John Leshy told a House committee last year.

A monumental effort

Lately, Clinton has been on a bit of a monument tear. Within the past year, he's also established an unusual new

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monument covering the rocks off California's coast, expanded California's existing Pinnacles National Monument, created new monuments in Arizona and cast about for potential new candidates elsewhere. Two months after the April designation of the Giant Sequoia monument, Vice President Al Gore dispatched himself west in June to announce four additional national monuments covering 550,750 acres in Washington, Oregon, Arizona and Colorado.

Wayburn's sequoia monument proposal also came at a particularly opportune time. Jack Ward Thomas, the Clinton administration's first-term Forest Service chief who in 1994 had opposed creation of a sequoia preserve, had in the meantime been replaced by a new team. McGinty's replacement at CEQ was George Frampton, the whip-smart, politically experienced former head of the Wilderness Society. Working at first behind the scenes, environmentalists spoke Clinton's language: The Natural Resources Defense Council gave the administration poll numbers contending that 81 percent of Californians asked replied that they favored creation of a sequoia monument.

The sequoia monument proposal followed the basic script of Grand Staircase-Escalante, starting with the element of surprise. Thomas and Radanovich, whose districts include the Sequoia National Forest, first heard about Clinton's proposal in February from newspaper reporters. In what tribal administrator Dave Nenna angrily described as a "slap in the face," the neighboring Tule Lake Indian Tribe likewise learned crucial details from the newspaper instead of directly from administration officials; Dooley got one or two day's advance notice. Unlike Grand Staircase-Escalante, the administration did initiate a 60-day comment-and-study period before the president made his formal announcement. More than 1,000 area residents, most apparently opposed to the monument, gathered in Fresno and Visalia for two lengthy and often heated sessions.

Still, the Sierra Club delivered some 600,000 postcards supporting the new monument, while 16 House Democrats from the California congressional delegation and 53 Democratic members of the California Legislature voiced their support. This generalized outpouring swamped the local opposition, raised by the Fresno, Kern and Tulare county supervisors among others. The president's intention, in any event, was never really in doubt. He was going to have his monument, even if the political fight over balanced Sierra Nevada management would continue unabated.

"These trees," Clinton said, "like life itself, are still fragile. The roots are surprisingly shallow, and the greatest threat to the trees' life is any disturbance to the tenuous balance between the tree and the ground that anchors it."

Michael Doyle is a reporter in the Washington bureau of McClatchy Newspapers. Comments may be sent to **edit@statenet.com.**

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letters

Postscript:

CJ readers list their best picks from California's literary landscape

In our June issue, we rolled out the first "Essential California Journal Reading List," a roster of 22 books selected by our writers and editors as insightful commentary on California's political, economic and social climate, both past and present. Because, like any list, ours is highly subjective, we invited readers to suggest their favorite picks. Many of you did. Here, then, are your literary additions to our list of essential California reads:

"The Essential California Journal Readi List" displayed at Avid Reader bookstor downtown Sacramento.

Good work on the reading list.

Two points: "Roughing It" (by Mark Twain) was first published in 1872 by American Book Publishing. By 1899 Twain had already finished three more travel books and had not been in California for 31 years.

Nathanael West [author of "Day of the Locust"] spelled his [name] "Nathanael," not "Nathaniel."

How about Abe Reuf's "San Francisco" or the new Gray Brechin book for the list?

Dennis Kelly
San Francisco

Great list of books. I'd add for consideration: "Dancing Bear" by Gladwin Hill, a great political history of the state; "The Big Four" by Oscar Lewis; and "California Rich" by Steven Birmingham.

And for history buffs, I think consideration should be given to the sections on early California in Richard Henry Dana's "Two Years Before the Mast," as well as "California Editor" by Thomas Storke.

Mike Stockstill
Irvine

One could never tell from your list that California is earthquake country. How about adding something like "The Last Days of the Late Great State of California"?

Gilbert Bendix
Kensington

To the list I would add:

"Back Roads of California" by Earl Thollander, published by Sunset books.

"Bunker Hill Los Angeles" by Leo Politi, published in 1964 by Desert-Southwest Inc.

"Panorama, a Picture History of Southern California," published in 1953 by the Title Insurance and Trust Company in Los Angeles.

You mentioned one of Robert Winter's books, but he also was one of the authors of two guide books to architecture, one for Southern California and one for Northern California. They were published in the 1970s by Peregrine.

You gave us sights and houses, and literature, but no food. That would have to be M.F.K. Fisher, especially her later writings, when she lived in Northern California, and her tales of growing up in Whittier.

Midi Cox
San Diego

I was rather surprised by the lack of attention paid to athletics and the entertainment industry. The narrative of this state's history should include more than a chronicle of its politics and policies. I was glad to see the inclusion of the works of Chandler, Hammett, and Copeland. To complement their presence, here are my suggestions:

"The Boys of Summer," by Roger Kahn. While it is about the Brooklyn Dodgers, the franchise is truly one of the great institutions of California. The title of Neil J. Sullivan's "The Dodgers Move West" is self-explanatory.

"Hollywood Babylon," by Kathleen and Kenneth Anger. This incendiary book shows the darker side of Hollywood. A more political twist, specifically the influence of Stalinism on filmmakers, is contained in Kenneth Lloyd Billingsley's "Hollywood Party: How Communism Seduced the American Film Industry in the 1930s and 1940s." Also, "Memo from David O. Selznick" is a great account

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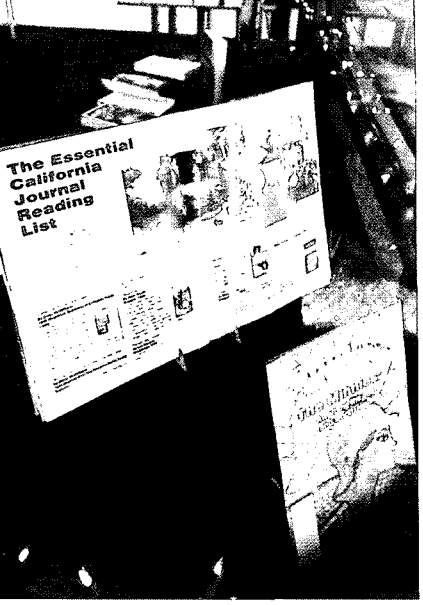

of one of the film industry's all-time giants.

"The Nudist on the Late Night Shift," by Po Bronson. Well-written vignettes about a cross-section of Silicon Valley inhabitants. It does a better job of personalizing the phenomena of the technological revolution than Kaplan's book.

Finally, a volume that seems to be more in accord with your present list is Paul Kens' "Justice Stephen Field: Shaping Liberty from the Gold Rush to the Gilded Age." Stephen J. Field had an indelible impact as a Californian, albeit in the 19th century. He helped found the city of Marysville, served as its alcalde (executive magistrate), and served in the Assembly where he incorporated the criminal and civil codes of his brother, David Dudley Field, into California law.

Field rose to the position of Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court and was appointed to the nation's highest court by Abraham Lincoln.

Another exemplary book on Justice Field is Carl Brent Swisher's "Stephen J. Field: Craftsman of the Law." Field himself wrote "Personal Reminiscences of Early Days in California." Justice Field's personal story (including vituperative personal feuds and an assassination attempt) and his doctrinal legacy is more than deserving of your audience's attention.

Nikos A. Leverenz
Carmichael

I greatly enjoyed your roster of essential reading in the past issue. However, may I suggest a couple more titles worthy of your list?

"The Sinking of the Lollipop" by Rodney G. Minott. A terrific anatomy of a grass-roots political campaign waged by the maverick, anti-war Republican Pete McCloskey against the establishment-backed Shirley Temple Black. This blueprint of how to wage an underdog campaign against a better-known and better-financed candidate hand-selected by the party elders remains an essential reading for any prospective insurgent candidate.

"The Rumble of California Politics," edited by Royce D. Delmatier, Clarence F. McIntosh and Earl G. Waters. As far as I am concerned, this is the definitive history of California politics between 1848-1970. It is meticulously researched and well-written — and deserving of an update.

Mike Fitzgerald
San Francisco

I would like to suggest Walter Mosley's "Devil in a Blue Dress" and "A Red Death" for essential California reading about South Central Los Angeles just after World War II.

As you read Mosley's description of Easy Rawlins' movements through this part of the city, you become aware of the structure of the black ghetto, and its ability to hide itself from the world outside its boundaries. The "curfew zone" before it was a curfew zone was teeming with vibrancy.

It's a good read and dead-on accurate.

Ross S. Clark
Lake Arrowhead

letters

Not the be-all and end-all, but an important book about the birth and growth of what may well be the most enduringly influential industry in America, let alone California or Los Angeles: "An Empire of Their Own: How the Jews Invented Hollywood," by Neal Gabler.

Larry Kaplan
Los Angeles

Thanks for the great reading suggestions. Please add my all-time favorite California book that I first read as a 13-year-old in 1969: "The Last Days of the Late, Great State of California" by Curt Gentry, 1968.

Richard Lemire
Riverside

I urge you to read Lou Cannon's "Official Negligence: How Rodney King and the Riots Changed Los Angeles and the LAPD."

Lou Cannon [contributing editor of *California Journal*] was honest, ethical and forthright in this effort as he asked probing, detailed questions about LAPD and its management. It is Pulitzer quality.

The responses that I gave to Mr. Cannon, and the responses that my friends who were interviewed for the book gave to Mr. Cannon, were quoted accurately and used in context.

"Official Negligence" is must reading for anyone who wants to probe and try to understand what has happened, what is happening and what should be done with the police department of California's largest city. It is an important work for all policy-makers and practitioners because what happens at LAPD will impact police work in the rest of the Golden State.

Ted Hunt, President
Los Angeles Police Protective League

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November 2000 Ballot Initiatives: Once More With Feeling?

California voters who march duty-bound to the polls in November will encounter a mercifully short list of statewide ballot proposals this time around. Only eight measures need be decided, less than half of the exhausting roster of 18 on last March's primary ballot. But before breathing too deep a sigh of relief, voters should be aware that some measures will have a familiar ring to them, altered only slightly from previous incarnations. This appears to reflect a new reality of the California initiative system: For proponents, a credo seems to be, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." Even if it means further annoying voters who feel they've been down this road before? Only November's results will tell. In the meantime, brush up. Our traditional preview of the issues follows. We hope you find the straight talk helpful.

— CJ Editors

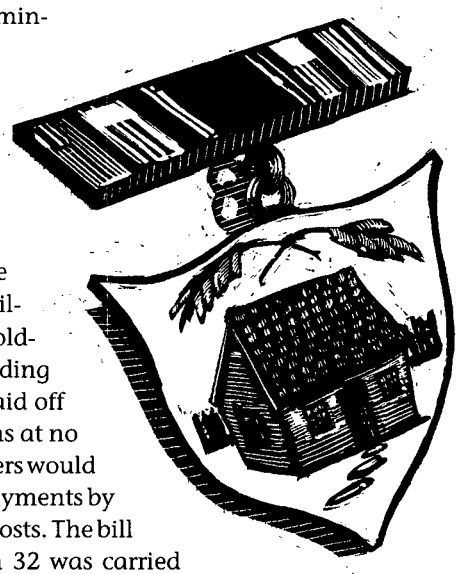
Proposition 32

Veterans' farm and home loans

Proposal: Proposition 32, placed on the ballot by the state Legislature, authorizes the state to sell $500 million in general obligation bonds for the California Department of Veterans Affairs to provide farm, home and mobile home loans to 2,500 California veterans.

Background: Once upon a time, a bond measure to provide home loans for California veterans was about as close to an electoral slam dunk as one could find on the ballot. Voters have approved 25 such measures since the Cal-Vet loan program was created in 1924, routinely delivering better than 60 percent of the vote. But the approval rate dropped to 58 percent in 1990, then dipped to 54 percent in 1996 — the last time voters were asked to approve such a proposal (Proposition 205). The downward trend on veterans-related measures was reversed in March 2000 when a bond aimed at improving state-run veterans homes (Proposition 16) passed with more than 60 percent of the vote. That could prove troublesome for Proposition 32, however, if voters, having just approved a veterans bond measure in March, are disinclined to vote for the Cal-Vet proposal in November.

Since its inception, the Cal-Vet program has parceled out nearly half a million loans, fueled by $8 billion in general obligation bonds. The money is administered and loaned directly by the California Department of Veterans Affairs. Borrowers are responsible for repaying the home purchase price, bond costs including interest, and administration of the program — all of which makes the Cal-Vet program self-supporting. The bonds sold under Proposition 32 would be paid off over 25 years and would cost the state approximately $360 million in interest to bondholders. Past bonds — including interest — have been paid off by participating veterans at no cost to the state. Taxpayers would only be on the hook if payments by veterans failed to cover costs. The bill authorizing Proposition 32 was carried by Assemblyman Jim Dutra (D-Fremont) and co-authored by Senator Maurice Johannessen (R-Redding). Both are veterans. The bill passed both houses of the Legislature without a single dissenting vote.



Arguments for: Assemblyman Dutra and Senator

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Johannessen argue that the Cal-Vet program is a working memorial to veterans and ought to be preserved. They say that because veterans repay the loans, plus interest and costs, the program is operated without cost to California taxpayers. Governor Gray Davis also supports the measure.

Arguments against: Opponents, led by Gary Wesley and Melvin Emerich of the Voter Information Alliance, argue that few veterans actually benefit from the program because "bureaucrats" decide which veterans receive the loans. They also complain that the program is not limited to veterans who actually fought in a war or saw combat but is available to any California veteran. Finally, they advance the philosophical argument that bonds, per se, are bad for California and costly to the state because they are tax-free investments and thus siphon money away from investments that otherwise would generate tax dollars.

— A.G. Block

Proposition 33

Legislators' Retirement Benefits

Proposal: Proposition 33 amends the state constitution to allow legislators to participate in the state's Public Employees' Retirement System, or PERS. A legislator who opts into the program would pay approximately 5 percent of his or her salary into the system. The state would contribute in the same manner it contributes for other state employees; a determination made each year by PERS based on a percentage of an employee's salary. Because PERS' investment portfolio has performed very well during the past year, the current employer rate is zero. It is projected to be around 4.5 percent in fiscal 2001-2002. It is anticipated that allowing legislators to participate in PERS would cost the state less than $1 million annually, which would be paid out of the state's annual allocation to support the Legislature.

Background: Proposition 140, passed by voters in November 1990, is best known for imposing term limits on California lawmakers and most constitutional officers. But Proposition 140 also eliminated the state-run Legislators' Retirement System. Lawmakers elected prior to 1990 were allowed to retain whatever benefits had been accrued during their legislative service. But members elected after that year entered a Legislature that did not offer any retirement benefits. (Proposition 140 did not affect retirement benefits for legislative staffers, who become vested in PERS after five years on the job.) Term limits aside, the provision knocking out retirement benefits for lawmakers was seen as one of the more punitive aspects of Proposition 140. At the time, then-Los Angeles County Supervisor Pete Schabarum, the primary architect of Proposition 140, argued that lawmakers received "extravagant pensions" that sometimes paid a legislator more in retirement than he or she had earned while in office. Opponents at the time countered that the absence of a decent retirement plan might deter ordinary citizens from seeking public office and that only those with no worries about supporting themselves in retirement – namely, the wealthy — could afford to serve in the Legislature.

Arguments for: The ballot arguments in favor of Proposition 33 were signed by, among others, Allen Zaremberg, president of the California Chamber of Commerce; Peter Szego of the American Association of Retired Persons; William Hauck, president of the California Business Roundtable and chairman of the California Constitutional Revision Commission; and Dan Terry, president of the California Professional Firefighters (who also signed the ballot argument against Proposition 140 back in 1990). But the real fight will be waged by members of the Legislature itself, including Assemblyman Lou Papan (D-Millbrae) who carried the bill that placed the measure on the ballot. Proponents argue that lawmakers ought to be treated like other public employees and not be penalized in retirement because they served in the Legislature. They point out that men and women who want to serve in the Legislature must consider setting aside six to eight years of private-sector earning power. That, they argue, may deter many non-wealthy Californians from seeking public office.

Arguments against: Some lawmakers, notably Republican Assembly members Tony Strickland of Moorpark

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and Pat Bates of Laguna Niguel, characterize Proposition 33 as a scheme to undermine the spirit of Proposition 140 and restore legislative perks and benefits. They point out that lawmakers earn nearly $100,000 a year in salary, plus another $24,000 in tax-free per diem income, and that they therefore should be able to set aside enough for their retirement without asking taxpayers to foot the bill. In addition, they argue, the measure creates a special retirement perk available only to legislators by allowing them to receive lifetime health benefits after only five years on the job, a benefit that other state employees must work longer to attain.

— *A.G. Block*

Proposition 34

Campaign Finance Reform

Proposal: This measure would repeal previous limits that California voters imposed on political contributions to statewide candidates. In place of those earlier restrictions – contained in 1996's Proposition 208, currently tied up in court – Proposition 34 would substitute its own, new limits that are less stringent. It would restrict candidate-to-candidate transfers of funds, allow undisclosed donations to political parties, and allow parties to spend unlimited amounts of "soft money." The measure was drawn up by state legislative leaders and signed by Governor Gray Davis, who now are submitting it to voters for approval as a constitutional amendment.

Background: Campaign finance reform seems to have a recurring part in California's perennial initiative dance, but, lately, voters have been skeptical about reformers' motives. Last spring, for example, voters rejected Proposition 25, placed on the ballot by Silicon Valley millionaire Ron Unz and which, while imposing restrictions on outside fund-raising, allowed wealthy candidates to tap into as much of their personal fortunes as they wished. Thanks in part to opposition by Governor Gray Davis, who time and again recounted the lopsidedness of his primary battle against two rich challengers, the spring measure flopped. Now, even though Davis' signature put this fall's measure on the ballot, he is speaking out against it, too, criticizing the way state Senate pro Tempore John Burton (D-San Francisco) rushed it through the Legislature without holding public hearings. "This bill was devised largely in secret, without input from the public or knowledgeable sources," the governor said, even as he acquiesced in signing it. Currently in California, the sky's the limit as far as political fund-raising goes. This is because the political parties sued to challenge Proposition 208, which voters liked but which the establishment saw as too restrictive to allow candidates to afford TV, radio, mail and phone blitzes. Many insiders believe that Proposition 34 was hastily pulled together by state Democratic Party leaders who saw signs that U.S. District Judge Lawrence Karlton was about to reinstate Proposition 208 in the wake of a favorable U.S. Supreme Court ruling *(Nixon v. Shrink Missouri Government PAC)*. Upon learning of Proposition 34, Karlton promptly suspended the trial of Proposition 208 pending the outcome of the November election. Indeed, Proposition 34 contains language that substitutes its provisions for those of Proposition 208, regardless of the court's decision. Among other things, Proposition 34 would impose limits of $3,000 in contributions per individual per election for legislative races, $5,000 for statewide races and $20,000 for governors' races. That compares to Proposition 208's limits of $250 for individual contributions to legislative candidates and $500 for those seeking statewide office. Initially, lawmakers drawing up Proposition 34 set a contribution limit of $10,000 per individual in gubernatorial races, but the Associated Press reported that Davis' office insisted that figure be upped to $20,000. In addition, the measure was written so that contribution limits wouldn't even take effect for the governors' contest until the year 2002, after Davis runs for re-election. Proposition 34 would also set voluntary spending limits for campaigns, and would extend contribution limits to the practice of candidates transferring funds among themselves. It would set new candidate disclosure requirements, limit the amount a candidate could loan himself or herself to $100,000 and allow unlimited donations to a political party.

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Arguments for: Proposition 208's limits are unconstitutionally low, in effect thwarting the free speech of candidates unable to raise enough money to get their messages out via paid media. By contrast, Proposition 34's limits are far more realistic. Proposition 34 bolsters some areas of campaign finance restrictions, requiring online disclosure of contributions for 90 days prior to an election and doubling to $5,000 the fine for campaign finance violations. It also requires that the funders of issue ads and slate mailers be identified. At any rate, even if imperfect, Proposition 34 should be passed because something is better than nothing. Burton, its author, is widely quoted as saying, "I've learned that you can't kill the good waiting for the perfect." The system as it stands now – with no limits at all – is ripe for abuse, and Proposition 34 can help combat political corruption.

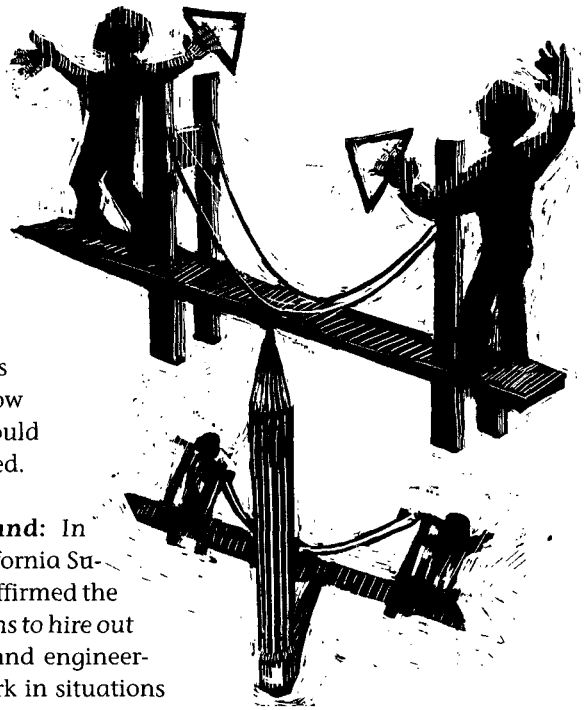
Arguments against: Proposition 34 is a "sneak attack" on Proposition 208, which in fact did appear about to be reinstated. Proposition 34's language repeals portions of six campaign finance laws dating back to the original Political Reform Act of 1974, and aims in particular to substitute a politician's wishlist for 208's strict contribution limits. Proposition 34 has loopholes that allow special interests to contribute money to political parties, which send it onto candidates without any public disclosure of the original donors. This amounts to money laundering and can worsen a climate in which special interests already call more than their fair share of the shots. Proposition 34's ballot language is deliberately misleading, encouraging voters to believe it tougher than it is. Officials in both major parties rigged the ballot language to exclude mention of Proposition 34's opponents: the League of Women Voters, the American Association of Retired Persons, Common Cause and Californians for Political Reform Foundation.

— Cynthia H. Craft

Proposition 35

Contracting Out Public Works Projects

Proposal: This measure would amend the state constitution to allow state and local governments more latitude in hiring qualified private firms for architectural and engineering services on public works projects. Currently, outside firms are hired only under special circumstances. The measure applies to all state and local public works projects, including the state's largest capital improvement effort, the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The measure also requires "a fair competitive selection process," although it does not specify how that process would be implemented.



Background: In 1997, the California Supreme Court affirmed the right of Caltrans to hire out architectural and engineering design work in situations where a cost-savings can be demonstrated, emergency work requires expedited schedules or a needed expertise is not available in-house. The Civil Engineers and Land Surveyors of California (CELSOC), a statewide association of private engineers, have tried for years to pave the way for outside contractors to earn a greater share of public works jobs. To that end, they have sponsored Proposition 35, spending $2 million to qualify it for the ballot. The union representing Caltrans engineers, on the other hand, has jealously guarded its domain, concerned that their work would be invaded by lawmakers all too eager to hand out plum jobs to political supporters. Two years ago, the public engineers sponsored their own initiative, Proposition 228, to install a new competitive bidding process for contracting out public works projects. It would have been a departure from the current qualifications-based selection process, which they say results in contracts going to firms with political connections, rather than bidders offering the most competitive price. Their measure lost by a sizable 62 percent. Senate President pro Tempore John Burton (D-San Francisco), concerned that a heated campaign would sour voter support for public financing of future road building and school projects, tried to broker a last-minute compromise ballot measure, but the effort fell apart.

Arguments For: Supporters are organized under the moniker Taxpayers for Fair Competition. The principal supporter is CELSOC, the umbrella organization for private engineering and surveying firms statewide. They have enlisted the support of numerous local governments, chambers of commerce and taxpayer groups. Supporters contend that the backlog of road and school construction

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projects would be expedited more cost-effectively when private companies are given the chance to handle a greater portion of public works projects.

Arguments Against: The "No on 35" campaign (Californians Opposed to School and Road Delay) is headed by the Public Engineers in California Government (PECG). They contend that a considerable number of public works projects already are contracted out, and that both state and local governments already have the latitude to grant even more projects to private firms. Opponents say the measure would actually delay public works schedules during the time that a "fair competitive process" — undefined in the initiative's ballot language — is developed.

— Kathleen Les

Proposition 36

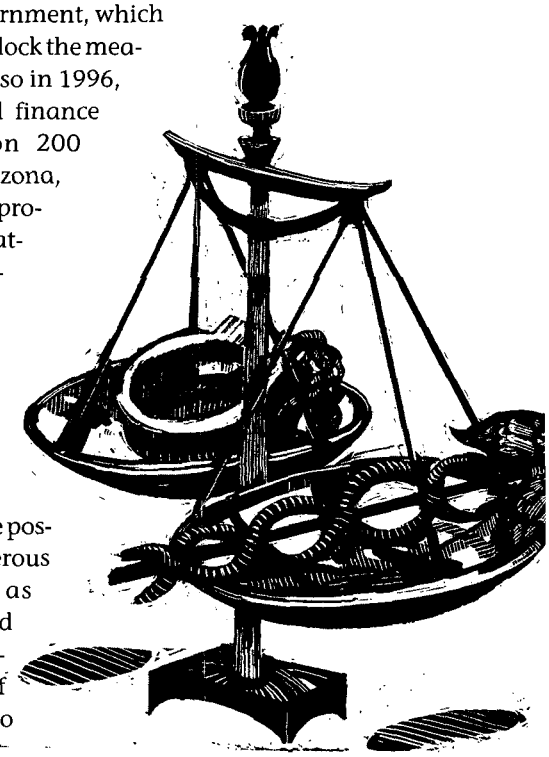
Drug Treatment for Non-violent Drug Offenders

Proposal: Proposition 36 is an initiative statue that requires first-time and some second- time offenders convicted for non-violent drug possession to receive probation and drug treatment instead of incarceration. Exceptions would apply for those convicted of a serious or violent felony in the previous five years, those who used a firearm during a crime, and those who refuse drug treatment or who have proven unreceptive to treatment in the past. Those eligible could receive drug treatment for one year, plus six months of follow-up counseling. Proposition 36 requires the state to provide counties with the drug treatment funding — $60 million in the first year and $120 million in succeeding years until 2006. After that, funding would be at the discretion of the governor and the state Legislature. Proposition 36 does not include funding for drug testing. The Legislative Analyst's Office estimates that Proposition 36 would save the state between $100 million and $150 million in prison operation costs and $475 million to $575 million in prison construction by sending fewer people to jail. It also estimates that counties will save $50 million due to lower jail populations.

Background: Since the "War on Drugs" began in the 1980s, efforts to stem the use of illegal narcotics have focused on law enforcement and tougher penalties for drug-related crimes. This approach, along with tougher sentencing laws such as "Three Strikes and You're Out," have ballooned prison and jail populations throughout the country. A recent study by the Justice Policy Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank, concluded that California is currently imprisoning 25 times more people for drug offenses than it did in 1980. State prisons spend an average of $24,000 a year to house each inmate.

Beginning in the 1990s, criminal justice officials began establishing drug courts as an alternative method for dealing with drug offenders. In drug courts, judges work with prosecutors, defense attorneys, treatment specialists and probation officers to devise a closely monitored probation term that includes drug treatment and testing for offenders. Those who fail the program can be sentenced to jail time. Today, there are 100 drug courts in California covering 46 counties.

Despite the establishment of drug courts, opponents of the "War on Drugs" feel government officials are still paying too much attention to the supply side of the drug problem and too little to curb demand. Instead of locking up more people, critics argue that drug abuse needs to be treated as a health issue with an emphasis on treatment. Some critics have called for the decriminalization of narcotics in certain instances. In November 1996, Proposition 215 was easily approved by voters to allow the legal possession and use of marijuana for medicinal purposes. The initiative was backed by three wealthy individuals — billionaire George Soros, insurance magnate Peter Lewis and University of Phoenix founder John Sperling. But implementation of Proposition 215 has been sporadic, in part because of opposition from the federal government, which is still trying to block the measure in court. Also in 1996, Sperling helped finance the Proposition 200 campaign in Arizona, which required probation and treatment for drug offenders. The measure was approved despite complaints from critics that the measure decriminalized the possession of dangerous drugs, such as heroin, and lacked the necessary "stick" of jail sanctions to



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ensure that offenders complete their treatment.

Arguments for: Supporters of Proposition 36 include Soros, Lewis and Sperling who spent a combined $1 million to collect signatures, plus the California Nurses Association, California Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors, more than 20 drug treatment providers, 13 Democratic state legislators, San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown, San Francisco Sheriff Mike Hennessey and others. Supporters say it's time to stop contributing to overcrowded prisons and inflated prison budgets by throwing nonviolent drug offenders behind bars. They advocate Proposition 36 as a safe means of treating drug addicts and reducing taxpayer costs of incarceration. They note that some opponents of Proposition 36, such as unions representing prison guards, have a vested interest in keeping prisons full.

Arguments against: Opponents include actor Martin Sheen, the honorary chair of the "No" campaign, plus San Diego Chargers owner Alex Spanos, the prison guards union (California Correctional Peace Officers Association), various organizations representing county district attorneys, sheriffs, city police chiefs and drug court professionals, the Betty Ford Center, the Drug Free America Foundation, 11 Republican and three Democratic legislators. They argue that Proposition 36 is a flawed and dangerous measure aimed more at decriminalizing drugs than curing substance abuse. By not incarcerating those who are convicted of possessing heroin, crack and methamphetamine, they believe Proposition 36 creates a danger to public safety and sends the wrong message to children. Instead, opponents support the drug court system, which they fear will be undermined by Proposition 36 because it will not pay for drug testing and will limit the discretion of judges to sentence offenders who fail to complete treatment programs.

— Noel Brinkerhoff

Proposition 37

Mitigation Fees and Taxes Re-Defined

Proposal: Amends the state constitution so that mandatory fees charged by state or local agencies to mitigate industrial health and environmental impacts are reclassified as taxes, requiring a two-thirds vote of the Legislature or local voters.

Background: In 1991, state lawmakers passed a bill enabling the state Department of Health Services to collect mitigation fees from the Sinclair Paint Co. to pay for a lead poisoning prevention program. The company sued to overturn the fees, but a California Supreme Court ruling in 1997 upheld the collection of fees assessed for the purpose of mitigating health and environmental effects caused by industrial pollution or contamination. Fearing that the court ruling would pave the way for fees assessed against a broad band of industries, such as tobacco, alcohol, and oil companies, a coalition of business groups tried, but failed, last year to legislatively pass a bill identical to Proposition 37. These same industries have since joined together as "Businesses and Taxpayers for Fair Fees" and spent $1.2 million to get Proposition 37 on the November ballot. The measure would reclassify fees as taxes when they are intended for a broad public purpose — such as smoking prevention programs — rather than more narrowly used to regulate a particular industry. The ballot measure also specifies that regulatory fees greater than the cost of the actual regulation performed be considered a tax. By reclassifying such fees as a tax, the measure would require a greater threshold for approval by a state or local agency. Taxes require a more stringent two-thirds vote, compared to regulatory fees, which require a simple majority.

Arguments for: Principal supporters include the California Chamber of Commerce, the California Taxpayers' Association, the California Manufacturers and Technology Association and the California Farm Bureau Federation. This coalition alleges that regulatory fees collected for broad public mitigation of industrial impacts are really taxes and should be recognized as such in the state Constitution. They maintain that it is too easy for governing bodies to slap an assessment fee on businesses, which consumers ultimately pay for in higher prices for goods and services.

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Arguments against: Those opposed claim the measure is no more than a ploy by big corporations to dodge financial responsibility for cleaning up their pollution and paying for detrimental health impacts caused by their products. Calling regulatory fees a tax, they say, will put lawmakers in the untenable position of appearing to levy higher taxes. If polluting businesses are not assessed, supporters say, taxpayers will pay the price for cleaning up industrial pollution or funding research into health hazards, such as smoking-related diseases. The opposition includes a variety of environmental groups and local governments, as well as the California Tax Reform Association and the California League of Conservation Voters.

— *Kathleen Les*

Proposition 38

School Vouchers

Proposal: This initiative would give parents $4,000 a year in state money to send their children to private or parochial schools of their choice. It expands eligibility in phases with children currently in public schools qualifying for vouchers first. Within four years, children currently in private schools could receive the money. The measure also would allow the state Legislature to replace the current school financing formula (or Proposition 98 guarantee) that sets aside roughly 40 percent of the state's general fund for education, with a system that sets per-pupil spending at no less than the national average. The nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office estimates that vouchers could initially cost the state as much as $1.1 billion annually for the first several years. In the long run, vouchers can either save the state between $1.3 billion and $6.7 billion or cost it about $3.3 billion a year, depending on how many public school students switch to vouchers, among other variables.

Background: Silicon Valley venture capitalist and former State Board of Education member Tim Draper is spearheading this encore attempt at school vouchers — one that promises to be the costliest, most controversial and hardest-fought measure on the November ballot. A similar initiative, Proposition 174, was overwhelmingly rejected (70 percent to 30 percent) by voters in November 1993, but only after the potent California Teachers Association led a $15 million campaign to crush it. Supporters of the current effort are banking on voter dissatisfaction with public schools and a heftier campaign war chest to turn the tide. Proponents are prepared to spend between $20 million to $40 million for television, radio and print advertisements as well as door-to-door foot soldiers. Overall spending estimates range anywhere from $30 million to $80 million. The upper-end figures reflect expectations that Draper, who has pledged at least $20 million of his own money, will provide the deep pockets to stock the yes-campaign arsenal. The software heavyweight has already put up roughly $2 million to get the measure qualified for the ballot. The opposition, which includes an odd political pairing of the state's largest teachers union, California Teachers Association, and the conservative anti-tax group, Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, concedes they will likely be out-spent — by between $5 million to $25 million. However, they have Governor Gray Davis on their side. Davis has pledged to defeat the measure through television commercials and campaign mailers. The most recent Field Poll shows that voters appear to have a somewhat more favorable outlook on vouchers since the last go-around. The first public polls on the 1993 voucher initiative showed the measure behind by 10 percentage points. Two months before the election, Field Poll results appeared evenly split on the issue, with 39 percent supporting and opposing the measure — and 22 percent undecided.

Arguments for: Proponents, including Silicon Valley's Draper and U.S. Senator John McCain from Arizona, say the public school system traps millions of children in failing schools without offering viable alternatives. Supporters say that parents should have the right and the financial ability to remove their children from poor-performing schools. They say the measure gives parents a choice, provides healthy competition and offers every child a chance at a quality education without a tax increase. Supporters contend the $4,000 voucher will save taxpayers

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money because it is less than the amount the state currently spends per student (about $6,672). The measure also would hold schools accountable to parents and taxpayers by requiring schools to provide financial statements and measurements of students' academic performance. Proponents say the measure supports public schools by guaranteeing that the system will always be funded at or above the national average in per-pupil spending. The initiative will force public schools to compete for students, thus encouraging schools to improve their performance. Furthermore, supporters believe it will improve the learning environment by promoting smaller, safer classes where teachers can give each student more attention.

Arguments against: Opponents of the measure, including Governor Gray Davis, the California Teachers Association and the California Business Roundtable, argue that public schools must be fixed, not abandoned. They contend that the measure will erode accountability, drain resources from public schools and burden taxpayers with additional costs. They say the measure would create a system of voucher schools exempt from state and local regulations. Additionally, the measure could cost California taxpayers nearly $3 billion a year to fund the education of the 700,000 children already enrolled in private schools. That expense cannot be drawn from Proposition 98 funds (the portion of the budget already set aside for public education) and would result in tax increases or cuts in vital services such as health care, public safety and transportation. Opponents also maintain that the system allows for discrimination since private schools, unlike public schools, are not required to admit all children and could reject students based on gender, ability to pay or academic and physical abilities. Opponents also say the measure has loopholes that could lead to fraud and abuse by individuals who spend funds for non-educational purposes or those who employ teachers without credentials or necessary experience.

— Emelyn Rodriguez

Proposition 39

School Bond Initiative

Proposal: Proposition 39 would amend the California Constitution by permitting approval of local school construction bonds with 55 percent of the vote instead of the current requirement of a two-thirds majority. The bonds could be used for construction, rehabilitation or replacement of school facilities. The measure would also: require local school districts to commission yearly audits to ensure bond-funded projects are on time and on budget; require districts to evaluate safety, class size and technology needs before submitting a bond request to voters; ban the use of bond funding for salaries or school operating expenses and require districts to detail each proposed construction project in a ballot proposal so voters could evaluate its merit.

Background: In a reprise showdown between the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association and Silicon Valley business leaders and teachers unions, this measure is a follow-up to March's Proposition 26, which would have allowed the approval of local school bonds by a majority rather than a two-thirds vote. Proposition 26 was defeated by voters 51 percent to 49 percent, a failure attributed to the unusually high turnout in the March primary of conservative voters energized by the close Republican race between Texas Governor George W. Bush and U.S. Senator John McCain. The new measure, Proposition 39, would set the voter approval level at 55 percent. Dubbed "Son of Proposition 26," the new effort features an odd political pairing of Democratic Governor Gray Davis and former Republican Governor Pete Wilson, who have joined forces in

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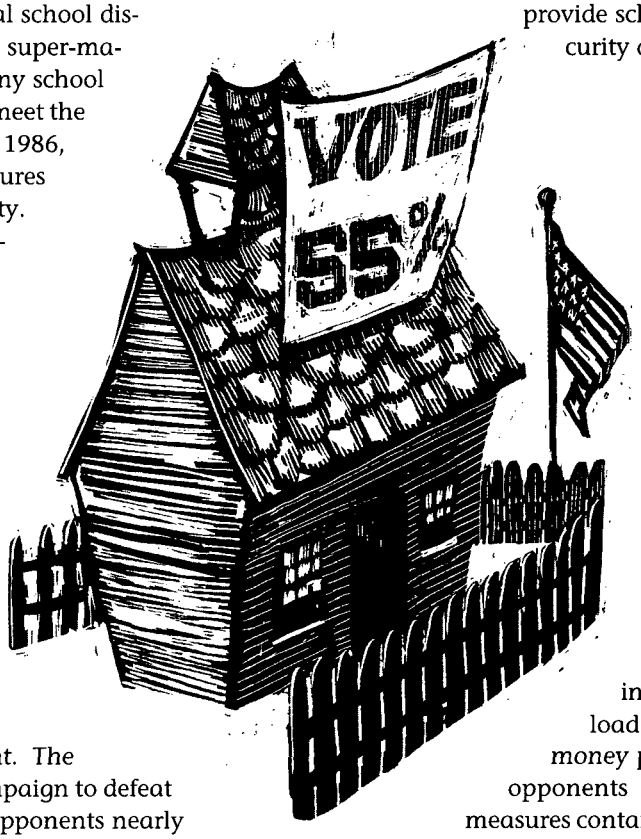
support of the measure. Davis pledged to take a leadership role in the fall campaign, after much criticism regarding his less visible efforts on behalf of the failed Proposition 26. Supporters of the new measure note that California's booming public school enrollment will require construction of an estimated 500 new schools and 20,000 more classrooms. Billions of dollars will be needed each year for building costs, modernization, renovation and repairs for aging facilities. Local school districts have long objected to the super-majority requirement because many school bond measures have failed to meet the two-thirds vote required. Since 1986, nearly half of school bond measures failed to attract a super-majority. The Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, the main opponent of proposals to lower the vote threshold, has succeed in defeating two similar measures before: March's Proposition 26 and 1993's Proposition 170, a constitutional amendment placed on the ballot by the Legislature that would have allowed a simple rather than a two-thirds majority vote to approve local school bonds. Voters resoundingly defeated Proposition 170, 69 percent to 31 percent. The Jarvis group, which led the campaign to defeat the 1993 measure, out-raised opponents nearly two-to-one ($1.18 million to $633,500). However, the group was outspent 20-1 in March during the Proposition 26 campaign. The Jarvis group has vowed to continue fighting efforts to lower the voting threshold, which it views as a fire wall to prevent future tax increases. However, the group concedes it will be out-spent again this fall despite its goal of raising $5 million to defeat Proposition 39. Supporters of the measure estimate they will spend about $24 million, the same amount spent in support of Proposition 26.



Arguments for: A broad bipartisan coalition including Democratic Governor Gray Davis, Republican former Governor Pete Wilson, the California Teachers Association, the California Business Roundtable and Silicon Valley executives such as computer industry multi-millionaire Reed Hastings, have joined forces in an effort to make it easier to pass school construction bonds. Supporters contend that a lower vote threshold would allow school districts to obtain the benefits of local bond money and a better chance to qualify for a share of funds from Proposition 1A, the voter-approved $9.2 billion statewide bond measure to modernize and build schools. To be eligible for Proposition 1A funds, schools must put up matching local funds, which they usually obtain through bond proposals. Proponents also say Proposition 39 will provide needed funds for new school construction required by rising enrollment and smaller classes mandated by the state's class-size reduction program. Funds are also needed for repairs of aging or dilapidated school facilities and to provide schools with phones and other security devices to ensure student safety.

Arguments against: Opponents of the measure, principally the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, contend if the measure passes, it will end 121 years of taxpayer protection through a constitutional provision requiring two-thirds vote on local bonds. If the voting threshold is lowered, most bond measures would pass and Californians will see higher property taxes and a crushing burden of bonded indebtedness. Opponents have charged that property taxes could more than double as a result of the initiative, therefore placing a heavy load on property owners whose tax money pay off the bonds. Furthermore, opponents argue that the accountability measures contained in the initiative are weak or duplicate already existing laws. The Jarvis group also contends if the two-thirds requirement is rescinded for school bonds, there will be attempts to do the same for parks and water projects and other bond elections.

— Emelyn Rodriguez

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The sisterhood in the U.S. Senate

by Marc Sandalow

A good old boy network still thrives on Capitol Hill. Curiously, it is made up of women. In an era when partisanship has all but eclipsed collegiality, the nine women of the U.S. Senate get together for dinner every few weeks. The press is not told. No staff is invited. And the talk is more likely to revolve around personal experiences than legislation.

The six Democrats and three Republicans favor white wine over whiskey. Still, their gatherings are reminiscent of the days when lawmakers would end a day of bickering with a fraternal snootful and a cigar.

This summer, the sisterhood introduced a book, jointly written about their experiences and dedicated to the proposition that for their club to expand, girls must be given role models.

Entitled "Nine and Counting," the book seeks to show young women that the caricature of a senator need not be an overweight man with a Mount Rushmore face, but could just as easily be a 4-foot-11 firebrand like Barbara Boxer of California or Barbara Mikulski of Maryland.

(The book tells the story of Boxer asking Mikulski in 1989 whether she should pursue a seat in the Senate. "Go for it," Mikulski urged her. "I need someone around here that I can see eye-to-eye with.")

Californians now take women senators for granted, electing Boxer and Dianne Feinstein in 1992. Before then, only six women had ever been elected to a full term.

The sisterhood was overlooked in this summer's veepstakes. Who would have thought that Vice President Al Gore would choose as a running mate a Jewish senator with a centrist voting record, who was quick to rebuke President Clinton's misbehavior — and whose last name wasn't Feinstein?

The Senate is said to be a place where every member looks in a mirror and thinks he is looking at a future president. That is not yet the experience for the women who, for the most part, never fantasized about winning public office, let alone a seat in the Senate.

The book tells of Feinstein's ambitions to follow her father into medicine until getting a "D" in genetics during her first semester at Stanford. Boxer recalls giving an impassioned speech on the environment during her 1972 campaign for the Marin County Board of Supervisors. At the conclusion, a woman waved her hand excitedly, finally asking, "Tell me, Barbara, when do you have time to do your dishes?"

Politically, Boxer and Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas are polar opposites. But the conservative Texan can match Boxer's stories of being dismissed for her gender, recalling her days as one of five women in her University of Texas Law School class of 500, and of being rejected by law firms who openly worried about training someone likely to get married, or pregnant.

Patty Murray of Washington tells of approaching a state lawmaker many years ago about restoring cuts to her favorite preschool program. "You can't make a difference," he told her. "You're just a mom in tennis shoes."

Californians now take women senators for granted, electing Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein in 1992.

No doubt the world of politics presents women with a new set of challenges and double standards. Feinstein explains why she generally chooses to campaign without her husband. "People think nothing of it when a male politician walks into a room holding his wife's hand. In fact, they expect a show of solidarity from a political wife," Feinstein says. "But if I walk into a room holding my husband's hand, it's looked upon quite differently. People immediately wonder how much influence he has."

Boxer made a similar point a different way: "My husband thought he married Debbie Reynolds and he woke up with Eleanor Roosevelt."

In most professions, as in politics, women have made enormous gains. The book is a reminder that those who have made it to the top of their fields are still pioneers. It is a role that some relish, and others just accept.

Feinstein was asked whether she liked being in public life, and answered by recalling an event many years ago where she was seated beside Indira Gandhi.

Feinstein asked Gandhi whether she enjoyed being prime minister of India. "I've never forgotten her answer," Feinstein said. "It was a careful response and honest. She said, 'I was born to a time and to a family. Perhaps I would not have chosen it. I had no choice. But it has been very rewarding.'"

"So," Feinstein continued, "if you're asking, 'Is this what I am meant to do?,' the answer is yes. Is it my calling? Yes."

Contributing Editor Marc Sandalow is Washington Bureau Chief for the San Francisco Chronicle. *Comments may be sent to* **edit@statenet.com.**

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to yield a sure harvest of timber [redacted] all their far-reaching
beneficent uses may be mai[redacted] unimpaired."
- John Muir

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There are already more than 1,000 forest protection laws and regulations covering activities in our private forests. They help foresters conserve the source of raw materials for the wood products we use every day. The laws also protect the habitats of animals and fish and the quality of our air and water. From the average of 7 trees we plant for every one harvested, to the untouched forest left along streams and rivers, it all helps maintain the balance between providing the wood products we love and protecting the forests we enjoy. Besides, protecting our forests is just good business. To find out more about how we're managing to make them last forever, call 1-877-REPLANT. Or go to www.calforests.org.

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